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## The Week-end Review

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## WORLD-WIDE STRATEGY

THE main difficulty in thinking about the war is to adjust our long-range and our short-range perspectives. On a short view the outlook is mixed. The Russian victories and the more hopeful prospect on the secondary Libyan front have to be balanced against disaster and anxiety in the Pacific. All this is so absorbing in its interest that few of us have allowed ourselves to realise fully what the entry into the war of America as a belligerent in both hemispheres means to the final outcome. Every shred of reserve vanished when Congress left the President free to employ all the Republic's forces, including its drafted conscripts, at his discretion beyond the American Continent. Up to midsummer, if we are frank with ourselves, we should have to admit that our belief in ultimate victory was rather a stubborn faith and a resolute act of will than a reasoned conviction. On a balance of man-power and mechanised divisions, only Russian or American resources could have enabled us to balance the equation. Now, thanks to the challenge of the Axis, Russia and America are both our Allies. The war may be prolonged and for some time to come the immediate prospect may often be over-clouded. America is ill-prepared and may need many months to mobilise all her colossal power, but only incredible incompetence could now render the final victory dubious. Two imponderable factors will now tell heavily in our favour. First, America has not this time "come in" in a spirit of disinterested knight-errantry; she has come in because she was challenged and attacked: like the rest of us she is fighting for her own safety and this she will do with effective unanimity and relentless determination. Secondly, the German people will feel weighing it down the pattern of a familiar and dreaded experience. The Siegfried myth, the legend of the hero whom the gods desert in the hour of victory, is deeply rooted in the imagination of this moody and emotional people. Already in the depths of its subconsciousness it may have ceased to hope.

The news from the grim Russian front is now so cheerful that one holds one's breath, afraid to give rein to all one's hopes. In swift succession, in two weeks, the Russians have won back Tikhvin, the key to the railway communications of Leningrad, the roads and railways that linked Moscow through Tula with the South and now those hotly disputed points on the approaches to Moscow, first Klin and then Kalinin. The recaptured towns are not of the first or even of the second rank, but the lines of communication are. If these advances continue a very little further, the Russians will again have the use of the main roads and railways all the way from Leningrad to Rostov. That is much, but it is not the chief reason for rejoicing. In every instance, but especially round Klin and Kalinin, the Russians have in their advance destroyed big formations of the enemy, including two mechanised divisions. We do not doubt that the German withdrawal was, save at Rostov, in a sense voluntary. They had postponed the capture of Moscow until late spring and had decided to shorten their lines of communication and bring back as many of their troops as they dare withdraw to habitable winter quarters. This was in itself equivalent to a heavy reverse, if not a defeat. But the Russians had meantime reorganised their forces so effectively that they have been able to counter-attack the enemy as he was preparing to withdraw with overwhelming effect. Presumably the Germans hope to hold a line passing through Smolensk, along which they may have dug some permanent trenches before the frost came. But will they be able to hold even this line? If they do hold it, will they venture to withdraw from the Eastern Front a force powerful enough to operate with success elsewhere—in Spain and North-West Africa, for example, or against the Turks? We cannot be sure. In any case the Red Army is now, and for some time to come will be, with the British Navy and Air Force, incomparably the greatest asset that the Grand Alliance possesses.

The prospect in the Pacific, as everyone realises, has been heavily compromised by the disasters that overtook our battleships in Malay waters and the American battle fleet in Pearl Harbour. Colonel Knox has now given a frank account of American losses of ships and men. The loss of the secondary base of Guam is now confirmed. Even more disturbing than these losses is their real cause, the inferiority in the air of British and Americans alike, both at Singapore and Pearl Harbour. In both cases this inferiority has an intellectual root. Has either of the High Commands, naval or military, yet grasped the full meaning of three-dimensional warfare? Both understand the importance of the new third arm, and both value and probably overvalue what it can achieve when it acts on a bombing offensive. But do they realise that every operation, at sea as on land, now involves the organic co-operation of surface forces (troops or ships) with aircraft? It is obvious in retrospect that our battleships based on Singapore ought to have had an aircraft carrier with them. They relied on land-based fighters, which failed them because the aerodrome was captured: that again happened because the army had failed to co-operate by providing tanks, guns and troops for its defence. Again in Libya our operations, which seem this week to be prospering, were hampered because we had no dive-bombers armed with guns which could deal with a tank. This operational use of aircraft was demonstrated by the Germans first at Teruel and then in the Ebro Valley in 1937 and 1938, yet neither the British nor the American High Command has learned the lesson yet. The result is that we have before us a period of grave peril in the Pacific. It is very doubtful whether the Malay Peninsula can be held, and Rangoon, if not Singapore, is therefore in danger. The Burma road is threatened, while the searoad to India between Sumatra and Penang Island may be dominated from the air.

This is already a sufficiently unpleasant situation without discussing the less immediate threats to the Dutch islands and Australia. The Philippines, like the British island of Hong Kong, hold out bravely, but Kowloon has been evacuated. The Chinese are displaying a spirited offensive disposition and might win the war against Japan on land, if only we could

supply them with bombers, tanks and artillery.

At Vladivostok the Russians have the only base near enough to Japan for offensive action; it has strong fleets of bombers and submarines. Speaking at Washington, Mr. Litvinov showed he understands that war is indivisible, but he held out no prospect of immediate Soviet action against Japan. The U.S.S.R. is very busy driving back Germany in Europe and Britain is in no position to urge new fronts for Russia. The deduction, of course, is that close co-ordination of the several independent Allied Commands is indispensable. Until a joint general staff works out a long-range strategical plan for victory, there can be no rational basis for the allocation of supplies. A single executive command is hardly possible in a world-wide war, but a central strategical council there certainly must be. Anglo-American relations are intimate and easy, but Russia stands apart and China is apt to be undervalued and neglected. We assume that a single command is inevitable in the Pacific, and that it falls to America, as the Atlantic and Mediterranean fall to Britain. The delicate problem is rather to provide for the offensives in Europe which must one day be undertaken. That problem is political as well as military and implies that a common scheme for the future of our Continent shall be accepted by Moscow as well as by London and Washington.

### Indian Independence

The Japanese advance and the threat to the whole of Britain's position in the Pacific and the Indian Oceans makes it immediately vital to understand the minds and meet the needs of India's leaders. In an able article in Wednesday's *News Chronicle*, Mr. Nehru stressed as an actual issue of present-day politics India's claim to independence, though he conceded that the old-world conception of absolute national sovereignty is obsolete. We have to ask ourselves whether the Dominion idea, which works happily within our own family, can be stretched to include a culture so different from our own as India's. As Mr. Nehru points out, if India is to enter an international group, her natural associates would rather be China, Persia, Burma and the Dutch Islands. We would add that if we win the war happily and preserve allied unity, a world-wide Union for certain purposes must be created. This India would enter. That should satisfy our natural questions about the safety of an independent India and her place in a world-wide economic system. Our own view is that the first urgent step is to set up a genuine National Government at Delhi, on the understanding that it shall steer India to the goal of her desires at the end of this war.

### Home Front *(by an Industrial Correspondent)*.

The National Arbitration Tribunal has awarded the engineers and shipbuilders a flat rate increase of 5s. a week. This is less than a quarter of what was asked for by the A.E.U. (the other unions make varying but broadly similar demands). The 4d. an hour asked for by the A.E.U. was to be an addition to the basic rate of wages, and would therefore have affected overtime and piecework rates. The 5s. a week which the Tribunal has granted will not raise these rates, as it will remain apart from the standard rate as a war advance. There is therefore an even wider gap than appears between demand and award; and even if the Unions expected a good deal less than they asked for, there is likely to be a good deal of disappointment. It will no doubt be objected that the granting of any advance at all is dangerous, at a time when there is no supply of surplus goods or services on which additional purchasing power can be spent. There would be some force in this argument if the Government had, in fact, been following any consistent wage-policy, so that current wage rates had some correspondence to degrees of skill. But, as everyone knows, there has been no wage-policy at all; and it is mainly an accident whether wages have increased much or little in any particular trade. A very interesting article by Professor Bowley in the current issue of the *Bulletin of the Oxford Institute of Statistics* (incidentally a most valuable source of wartime economic information) analyses the changes in wage-rates in different industries between 1938 and the present time. His figures show that, over this period, average wage-rates of skilled engineers rose by only 16 per cent. (excluding the new advance), those of engineering labourers by 21 per cent., and those of shipbuilders by 19 per cent. These advances are all below the general average of all the trades included.

* * *

Of course, many men in the engineering and shipbuilding trades earn a good deal more than the standard weekly rates. But neither rates nor earnings bear out the view that there has been any runaway tendency in the wages of munition workers. A limited number of individuals here and there doubtless earn very big money; but this is not true of the main body of piece-workers, and the general run of time-workers were having a pretty thin time prior to the concession which they have now received. Even now an average wage-rate of 81s. 9d. seems low for a group of men as highly skilled and as essential to the war effort as the engineering craftsman. The main instance in which there has been a runaway tendency is not among the skilled men, but among some of the unapprenticed boys and youths. The policy of taking away the labourer for the armed forces, while reserving the skilled men, created a void which was promptly filled by the employment of youths below military age at men's rates. In the building industry, this even led to lads breaking their apprenticeship in order to take advantage of the higher rates they could command as labourers—a most undesirable practice in view of the acute prospective shortage of skilled building workers.

* * *

How will the outbreak of war in the Far East affect economic conditions in this country? It is bound to slow down the arrivals of munitions from the United States—already slowed down by the division of supplies to the Soviet Union. It will thus reduce the rate at which we can equip a large land army on modern lines, and will increase the need for munitions workers relatively to the need for recruits for the armed forces. Yet, in spite of this, the Government seems to be proceeding with the dereservation of essential workers more rapidly than ever before. It is cancelling exemptions on the new individual basis at a great rate, and it is even extracting more male workers from agriculture. Doubtless, the theory is that these losses are to be made good under the new Man-Power Bill, by other men from less essential occupations and especially by women. But can they really be made good? To an outsider the present policy does not seem to make sense. Cannot the Army at any rate make good its own wastage by economies of auxiliary man-power and by larger use of women, without taking men workers away from the essential industries?

* * *

Especially, I have a feeling that, in this newest phase of the war, we ought to be looking more than hitherto to the expansion of our raw material resources. Can we expect as much steel as we have been getting from the United States; and shall we have to do more than we have been doing to make full use of our own resources of iron ore in the Midlands? Shall we have to expand our home steel production, even against the ideas of the Iron and Steel Federation? Will Cornish tin assume an increased importance? I believe iron miners and the tin miners are still exceedingly badly paid, and that it has been difficult to hold together an adequate labour force for these small trades. Again, under the new conditions recovery of every scrap of material that can be salved for important processes becomes important. The Germans are past masters at this business of wasting nothing that can possibly be turned to account, whereas our manufacturers have only lately begun to pay much attention to the less obvious kinds of factory scrap. I hope I am unduly pessimistic about the effects of the American entry into war on our immediate prospects of getting war supplies from that source. Whether or no, it behoves us to be more than ever on our guard both against every kind of waste and against any tendency on the part of vested interests to resist the utmost possible expansion of home output, or of the national service authorities to subtract more workers from industry without counting the cost. In the long run, the Americans will no doubt be able to resume generous supplies of both materials and finished goods to this country. But for a time we are likely to have to rely more than we have been expecting on our own domestic resources.

* * *

This means, of course, all the greater need to secure as many recruits as possible for the A.T.S. and the other women's forces attached to the Services. The bad moral name of the A.T.S. is, I am sure, largely undeserved. I have heard much worse things said by persons who ought to know about conditions in certain big munitions factories than about conditions in the Army. The chief fault in the A.T.S., as far as I can make out, is not immorality, but lack of proper attention to welfare and, in some cases, bad officering. Fortunately, there are signs that both these problems are being taken in hand; but one wonders how far the War Office have the imagination needed for tackling them successfully. It has shown little enough in preventing boredom from developing among soldiers kept in camp over long periods with no early expectations of active service; and, even if imagination does sprout sometimes in Whitehall, there are too many mutts among high regimental officers for it to be easily translated into practical achievement for the main body of the Army. Perhaps the need to create better conditions for the A.T.S. will even have some favourable reactions in what is done for the ordinary soldiers. The R.A.F., aided by the double advantage of getting the pick of the recruits and being on active service all the time, is much better now, and also much better at using its men in the jobs for which they are most fitted. I hope the War Office will not scorn, in its treatment of both men and women, to take a leaf or two out of the Air Ministry's book.

### Parliament and the Pacific. *(By a Parliamentary Correspondent)*

The Prime Minister's statement on the war situation was made in reply to a question, no debate was possible. Roger Keyes, with obvious emotion, tried to raise the questions which were standing out in everyone's mind, but failed to elicit a reply. Hugh O'Neill by asking how the seven Japanese aircraft were destroyed, forced the Prime Minister to admit that these capital ships had no aircraft protection. The Prime Minister informed the House many weeks ago of Japan's possible entry into the war. No explanations can justify the failure to provide adequate defences for the airfields in Malaya. Neither lack of time nor lack of equipment can explain what is felt to be the needless endangering of our Gibraltar in the East.

Conservative Members in particular are asking why ships were sent to Singapore without adequate air support. Furious rumblings come from the 1922 Committee.

Lord Woolton's new black market penalties are welcomed among Members of all parties. These racketeers are to be mulcted of three times the value of the goods concerned. This is a popular and proper move.

# THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW

We publish this week a remarkable article from Dr. Otto Strasser, whose brother was killed in the great purge in 1934, and who writes with a long and intimate knowledge of the Nazi movement. We need not take too seriously his claim to know more than anyone else except Himmler about German morale, but we may notice a number of factors which support his optimistic forecast. Since his article was despatched from Canada, the magnitude of the German reverse in Russia must have become far more obvious to the mass of Germans, while Hitler's declaration of war against the United States must greatly have increased their anxiety.

We cannot yet estimate the extent of the German discomfiture in the Soviet Union. Hitler promised on more than one occasion a speedy victory over the Bolshevik barbarians; in his speech last week he made no mention of any attack on Moscow or Rostov after November 6th. He dealt with the war as if the German plan had been to advance in Russia and to stop and dig in when winter made fighting difficult. The German people can no longer be thus easily deceived. Hitler's figure of 162,000 Germans killed in the Russian campaign will not convince a population in which most families mourn the loss of a friend, relative or breadwinner. How many of those who listened to Hitler's speech in Germany noticed the odd fact that the number of days between the date of the German attack on Russia and the beginning of December was in fact 162, and asked themselves whether the Führer's figure was not merely someone's invention based on the round estimate of 1,000 killed a day? Dismissing extravagant estimates, Hitler's figure should at least be multiplied by seven.

The present fighting in Russia is calculated to produce the maximum of demoralisation in the retreating army. True, there is not at present any sign of rout; the Germans are retreating and fighting a rearguard action. But they are retreating in cold so intense that many die from exposure and they are retreating to winter quarters whose location is not apparent. In the last war the German armies had constructed a magnificent series of trenches and dug-outs along the Russian front. In this war, though miracles may have been accomplished by Hitler's labour organisation, there can scarcely have been time to construct a deep defensive line from Smolensk to the Black Sea before frost made trench-digging impossible. Railway coaches and surface huts, even if unmolested by Russian aeroplanes, are little shelter against the cruel winds of the Steppes. In a word, putting matters at the best for the Germans, it is by no means clear that they are retreating to a defensive position which is either physically tolerable or militarily defensible. Even if the Germans can hold a position across the Steppes, this desperate winter will suit the Russian defence rather than the Hitler offensive, which was planned as a Blitzkrieg. When the fact of this new retreat from Moscow leaks out in Germany, as it assuredly must, the effect on morale at home will be no less than on the troops themselves.

Hitler's armies have never before retreated and highly mechanised troops find retreat a difficult operation. They have aroused a terrible enemy. In their rapid advance into the Soviet Union the Germans killed an immense number of Russians left behind the lines either as civilians or to harass the German communications as guerilla fighters. When they rounded up Russian prisoners they appear to have had neither the time nor the desire to keep them alive. The Nazi doctrine holds that the Slav is racially inferior and justly killed off. According to reports to which the Prime Minister has referred in more than one speech, thousands of Russian prisoners, their boots removed, have been left in compounds to starve to death. To-day, as they withdraw, the German troops must be conscious of the terrible hatred and anger which such atrocities have created; there is already evidence that the Russian soldiers are giving no quarter. For sheer human misery and savagery of fighting it is difficult to find any historical parallel for the horror that Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union let loose both on the Russian and German peoples.

In Germany itself there is no evidence of any breakdown or crack in morale, but there are a variety of indications that morale is only maintained by fear. Hitler ended his unusual speech last week, not with boasts of swift victory and with the assumption that all the German people were with him, but with a threat of extermination to any elements in Germany which might oppose him or weaken his armies. This is indeed a significant change. Hitler may have been troubled partly by the *Kulturkampf* that is now raging in Germany. The invitation to passive resistance so boldly proclaimed by the Bishop of Münster has now been repeated in equally majestic language by the Protestant Bishop of Wurtemburg, who speaks of the necessity of Christians strenuously resisting the inner enemy within the Third Reich. In September Hitler warned the followers of the Bishop of Münster that he would not tolerate any resistance, and that if it continued he would "strike like lightning." Instead of striking he has uttered another warning. He is still fighting an "anti-Bolshevik crusade," for which he wants at least the appearance of Catholic support everywhere. There is nothing to-day he could so little afford as to outrage the Pope and render impossible the adherence of his Catholic satellites in Vichy-France and Franco's Spain. In uttering these threats to the German people, the Führer may have had in mind something more than the Christian opposition. In the latest and very interesting report on the inside of Germany issued by the *Neu Beginnen* group, we notice the evidence of a Jewish worker who only left the Reich in September, 1941. His evidence confirms other reports that because he was a Jew his hostility to Hitler was assumed. Every kindness was shown to him in the factory where he worked; the workers were openly hostile to the Nazis. Workers, he says, never speak of "we Germans," but "they," the Nazis, whom they accuse of every corruption and describe as the "brown scoundrels." The common and bitter jest runs that as in 1918 "we will go on working till we are dead." Many workers listen to B.B.C. propaganda. This correspondent attributes this open abuse of the Nazis to the absence in the army of young men impregnated with Nazi doctrine. They have left behind them in the factories a large proportion of elder workmen who were members of the Communist or Social Democrat Parties in the days of the Weimar Republic. There is nothing fanciful in the assumption that Hitler's threats reflect a fear of the growth of left-wing opposition in the mines and workshops—and perhaps in the Navy, where mutiny began in 1918. Another correspondent in *Neu Beginnen* who left Germany in August, 1941, adds one reflection which we have constantly emphasised in this journal. "The Nazi propaganda about the dividing up and destruction plans of the enemy is the one really effective part of German propaganda. This is believed and taken seriously." He declares that fear of Europe's revenge is the one factor that now holds Nazi Germany together. He asks for the presentation of an alternative for the German people. We add that we know well enough that the Germans will not again believe us if we preach the doctrines of President Wilson. But there may be a large percentage of workers who will listen if in conjunction with Russia we can assure to those who take an active part in overthrowing the Nazis, a future which combines freedom and bread.

Revolutions begin from the top as well as from the bottom. Discontent and anger amongst common people, that is to say, cannot be effective unless there is a breakdown in the governmental machine and in the army itself. In assessing Dr. Strasser's thesis, we must look not only for discontent below, but also for strain at the top. Here we notice first the new tone of Hitler's speech; menace takes the place of confidence. Secondly, we notice that Goebbels, who now formally replies each week to British propaganda, says that every "attitude of mind that is suggested by London" must be regarded as dangerous to the German people. British propaganda has then become a menace to the Nazi regime. Thirdly, we are aware that the German army in Russia has been commanded from two places: the headquarters of the General Staff have been separate from those of the Führer with his personal staff. When Hitler plunged and promised speedy victory, he took personal responsibility. That, it was surmised, was at the desire of generals who understood better than he the risks of attacking Russia so late in the year. To-day he has given the general order for retreat. We may suppose with good grounds that this is the will of generals, who have convinced the Führer that it is suicidal to continue. Here may be the beginning of that "crack," for which we all hope, between the Nazi Party and the German Army. If it should develop into a serious fissure, it will be the beginning of the end of the German war machine. With that machine we cannot make peace, but we could and should make peace with a Germany of common people which will emerge, perhaps without leaders, if the German war machine and the Nazi Party are destroyed. Political warfare has now a greater part to play than ever before. The end may yet be far off. Hitler and his generals may long hold together; they may have many more campaigns to fight, other successes to achieve, other countries to over-run. But at last we believe that they are frightened, and we note that criticism and anger are again alive in the Third Reich. We can rely on the British and Russian departments of Political Warfare to inflame the anger and give material for the criticism. But to succeed at the earliest moment a constructive alternative for Germany should be offered—and sincerely offered—to the German people, and on this point every effort should be made to bring Russian and British propaganda into harmony. To-day, infuriated by German savagery, the Soviet Union speaks and acts with a corresponding brutality; but Soviet philosophy provides, as any sane thinking must provide, for harmony with the workers of Germany once its Fascist and military elements are destroyed. We are well aware of the immense difficulties in the way of ideological co-operation. But we believe that the present circumstance offers a unique opportunity to summount these difficulties for a great practical objective. In the creation of the common General Staff, which is now universally urged, it may be as important to harmonise and synchronise the propaganda offensive in the air as it is to create two military fronts on land.

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## LONG-PREPARED WAR

THE Axis Powers have never taken the policy of appeasement seriously, and have always acted on the assumption that it was the democratic way of playing for time. The Democratic Powers on the other hand assumed the success of their policy, but apparently took very few precautions to meet the results of failure.

The Japanese Naval authorities have had a consistent policy for the Pacific since the last war. They were shrewd enough to realise that at some future date, the United States, perhaps in conjunction with the British Empire, would not stand by and watch them achieve mastery over the richest source of raw materials and the greatest markets still undeveloped in the world. In the last war Japan took full advantage of her opportunities; by secret treaty with the Allied nations, by enforcing the twenty-one demands on China, and by exploiting her position as the only Power with a navy in the Far Eastern waters, she became the dominant power in the Pacific. Having staked her claim during the war, she received at Versailles the mandate for the South Sea Islands. At the Washington Conference in 1922, American pressure forced her to disgorge some of her gains in China; but Japan was able to offset the unfavourable implications of the Nine Power Treaty by obtaining in the Five Power Treaty on Naval Armaments an agreement with the British Empire and the United States about the island bases of the Pacific. The result of this agreement was to make Japan's defensive position impregnable by sea and to give her an uninterrupted security for her communications with China and with her possessions. Hong Kong and the Philippines were left at Japan's mercy.

In 1936 Japan denounced this and other Treaties guaranteeing the *status quo* in Asia and concentrated on preparations for war. Japan left the League of Nations in 1933, but since she was allowed to remain a Mandatory Power, her naval position in the Pacific was unchallenged. During the four years of the war with China, she has taken over a whole series of significant strategic positions—Hainan Island, the Spratleys, the Parcels, Camranh Bay and Saigon.

The U.S.A. refused to take notice of this Japanese advance until Indo-China was occupied in 1940. Washington then began to plan for a two-ocean navy scheduled for 1947. Simultaneously with an increased naval programme, plans were made for the strengthening of such naval outposts as Guam, Wake, Midway Islands, the Johnson and Palmyra Islands, and for additions to Pearl Harbour on the island of Oahu, the centre of America's Pacific strategy, as well as to Manila. How far these plans have progressed in the past few months we do not know, but it is a safe supposition to make that Japanese preparations were on a much bigger scale, that far more attention had been given to the hundreds of islands in the Pacific, including small atolls strategically placed and invaluable as oil and food dumps. Lying nearer to these islands, the Japanese have been able without fuss to take advantage of their geographical advantage and of America's political isolation.

The American disadvantage is obvious. Pearl Harbour, for instance, which is reputed to be large enough to shelter at the same time most of the vessels of the United States Fleet, is 2,100 miles from San Francisco and 4,710 miles from the Panama Canal. Naval strategists must have known that this was a particularly tempting target for the Japanese. Someone will have to do a lot of explaining to get over the fact that they were taken unawares.

A similar story of belated preparations to meet a possible Japanese attack can be told of American preparations in the northern Pacific. In March of this year Congress appropriated four million dollars for the construction of a submarine base at Kodiak, an important link between Sitka and Unalaska Island on which is Dutch Harbour, the most important site in the chain of the Aleutian Islands. Naval and aviation sites at Sitka and Kodiak, and at Fairbanks and at Anchorage in Alaska had been settled; some building began in 1939. It was supposed that most of these bases would be ready by the summer of this year.

Japan has watched these leisurely preparations for America's defence of the Pacific and used the time to plan one of the most daring naval coups in the history of naval warfare. But this is not the whole story. During the past few years she has bought unlimited supplies of oil and war materials from the United States. In 1938 56 per cent. of Japan's total imports of war materials came from America, while 20 per cent. came from the British Empire. America and this country have very good reason to know the large reserves which are at Japan's disposal; they have themselves supplied most of it. This applies particularly to oil, which is the most important of all materials in naval warfare on the wide spaces of the Pacific Ocean.

The British Empire and the Netherlands East Indies have adopted a more active strategy in the past year. They were already at war with Japan's European partner, and geographically they were better placed than the U.S.A. Throughout the spring, Australian, British and Indian troops were stationed at various posts throughout the Malayan Peninsula, and close relations between the Australians and the Dutch authorities have developed into something approaching a common war strategy. A chain of aerodromes has been constructed midway between the coast and the frontiers of China and Thailand stretching from Lashio to Mergui; these aerodromes, extending in an arc along the whole defensive line to Singapore and beyond across the Netherlands East Indies, is now of vital importance. But the first two week's fighting seem to indicate that they were not yet up to their intended strength.

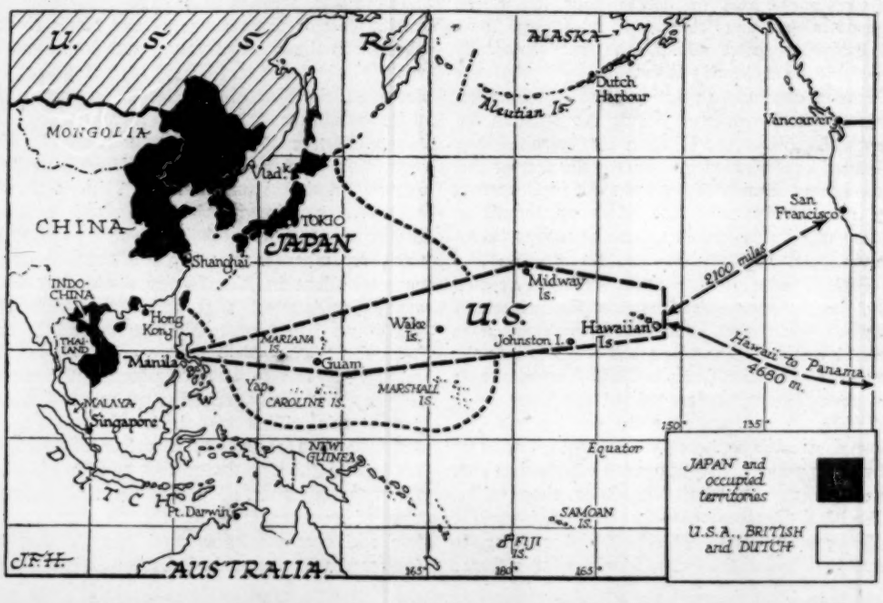
Singapore to-day is one of the most strongly fortified areas in the world, commanding the South Pacific, the waters of Australasia, and the Indian Ocean. Along four miles of the Johore Straits, this naval base can accommodate and refit the biggest warships, and here are concentrated the air and naval forces of Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand. In the southern part of this defence area of the Pacific, the main naval and air bases are Sydney, Port Darwin, Thursday Island (Australia) and Auckland (New Zealand). The Netherlands East Indies are a very important part of the defence. Surabaya, on Java, is the chief naval and air base where the Dutch fleet is concentrated. Half-way between Singapore and Port Darwin, Surabaya commands the passage between the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. Eastwards, along the 3,000-mile chain of islands, there are small seaplane stations and fuel depots of great value since they would provide the greater part of the oil for any fleet operating in the Pacific. An incident almost overlooked in the British press a few weeks ago was an agreement between Japan and Portugal by which Japan opened an air-service between Palau and Timor, the latter of which is on the direct air line from Java to Port Darwin.

Japan has planned her campaign down to the last detail. The talks in Washington were a clever smoke-screen, but her far-reaching moves on December 7th were the result of years of carefully planned preparations. Yet her attacks on Hong Kong and on Manila must have been foreseen; both were vulnerable places, advanced outposts from Singapore and the Hawaiian islands respectively. The same is true of, to a lesser degree, of Guam Island.

Had no one foreseen during the Kurusu-Nomura-Roosevelt discussions that there might be a carefully synchronised attack not only within the strategic quadrilateral bounded by the southern coasts of China, the Malayan Peninsula, the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines, but at the same time on Wake Island, Midway Island and on Pearl Harbour?

The attack cost America two battleships and five other craft; and she can hardly hold any bases save Hawaii and the Philippines. Japan has within a week gained the freedom of manœuvre in the Pacific which will allow her to concentrate on the Malayan Peninsula and on Singapore. The ability of Hong Kong to maintain resistance for long is doubtful, although the Chinese offensive may play an important part. General Chiang Kai-shek has offered to make any sacrifice which is necessary to achieve a victory over the Axis—an offer made earlier but unheeded. Further, Mr. Litvinov has stated in an interview in Washington that his country would welcome joint conversations with Britain, America, China and the Dutch East Indies with the objective of defining a unified Allied strategy. President Roosevelt is said to have endorsed this view. If to-day Japan is within striking distance of Singapore and the Rising Sun flag has taken the place of the Stars and Stripes on certain strategic islands in the Pacific, it is mainly due to the past failure of the anti-Fascist front to unite. The absence of a common policy was serious enough in "peace" time. In war it is fatal.

DOROTHY WOODMAN



# TENSION IN GERMANY

THE inner collapse of Hitler's régime has become a matter of immediate fear and hope for millions. Basically, this collapse was certain from the very beginning of the war. Hitler's position demanded a Blitz-War and a Blitz-Victory. In default of the latter, Hitler must lose this war. The military losses, the tremendous economic sacrifices, and especially the element of tension inherent in the Hitler system, must lead to the revolution which has been for years the nightmare of Hitler and Himmler.

There are, perhaps, only two people who are fully aware of the tremendous tension which has existed in Germany since Hitler's advent to power. The two people are Heinrich Himmler and myself. Since 1933 Germany has been divided into three political categories, one of which comprises the confirmed Nazis (about 10 per cent.), the second, the convinced Anti-Nazis (about 10 per cent.), the third, the 80 per cent. of unpolitical Germans, who—more or less loyally—go along with the victor. Himmler, Germany's supreme police chief, and leader of the S.S., the German "Iron Guard," is in a position to know best of all Nazis the strength and weakness of the régime. I, as leader of the "Black Front," the best organised—if not the largest—anti-Nazi organisation in Germany, have as thorough a knowledge of the situation from the opposite angle. Both of us know that the 80 per cent. of loyal Germans, who, incidentally, make up the main body of the fighting force, do not possess any political convictions. Their attitude is determined by emotional factors, more especially by the instinct of self-preservation, which naturally leads them to the side of the probable victor. Foreigners often dispute the existence of an outright anti-Nazi opposition in Germany. This superficial view is best refuted by the terror which Hitler's régime has been forced to adopt since the very beginning, and which, far from having abated, has grown tremendously.

According to a secret Gestapo report of September, 1937, the number of German political prisoners had mounted to over 1,700,000 by June, 1937. For the first six months of the year 1937, the report announced arrest of 119,000 Germans for political activity in opposition to the régime. During the same period, 92,000 persons had been released from prisons and concentration camps. In six comparatively quiet months, therefore, Himmler had been forced to arrest over 100,000 Germans (not Jews, but so-called Aryans!) because of active opposition to the Hitler system. Foreign observers are right only in so far as during the eight years of Nazi dictatorship all outward forms of organisation of a German Opposition have been crushed by Himmler's secret police. Although this has impaired the political preparedness of the organisations as such, it has affected neither the numerical strength nor the moral integrity of the German Opposition.

Even within the Nazi system itself, there are points of great strain, the most important of which lies in the relationship of Party and Army. It is necessary to recall that the Hitler system itself constitutes the alliance of a demagogical revolutionary movement with the reactionary spirit of Old Prussia. The spiritual affinity between the two emanates from the fact that Hitler, in need of a prop, and having no philosophy of his own, took over the traditional Prussian philosophy of might and made it his. The long-range aims of these two strange allies diverge on nearly all points, economic, political and cultural; but their interests meet in one immediate goal—the domination of Europe by Prussia-Germany. As this objective was the main reason for their alliance, it follows automatically that the coalition must dissolve either when the goal has been reached, or if it proves to be unobtainable. The unexpectedly strong resistance of Russia, the increase in British aeroplanes and tanks, the stepping up of United States production, and the growing conviction in Germany that America will never tolerate a Hitler victory, have thoroughly undermined the alliance of Party and Army inside the Hitler system.

Hitler's way out of this dilemma was to declare that Germany was fighting for her very existence, because her defeat, in Goebbels's own words, would mean "a brand of Hell, compared to which all former suffering would be sweetness and light." Hitler and Goebbels are thus attempting even at this late date to make their war into a national one. Until now this war has been looked upon in Germany as Hitler's war. Not for one instant was it possible to say in 1939 what had seemed justified in 1914, after the murder of Serajevo—that Germany was fighting a defensive war. Every German knew that it was Hitler who ordered—without actual provocation—the invasions of Poland, Denmark, Norway, of Luxemburg, Belgium, and Holland. Of course, that argument meant nothing to the German General Staff. That organisation was in complete agreement with all and any orders which coincided with the traditional Prussian policy of domination. But it did mean something to the average German, as is proved by letters and reports from the Reich. Herein lies the reason for the strange apathy of the German people towards the events of this war, an apathy seen and commented upon by all foreign observers.

This attitude of the people could not have had immediate military consequences, partly for the reason that the civilian and military authorities do not inquire into the feelings of the individual. The main reason is undoubtedly the pressure of propaganda and terror, which not only prohibits the expression of such sentiments, but very often even prevents people becoming conscious of them. However, as soon as Hitler and Goebbels embark upon a campaign to persuade them of the national significance of this war, the passiveness of the German people becomes their greatest enemy. While it was possible to turn the average German into a good soldier, by relying on a traditional military discipline, and on terrorisation, it is quite impossible for a tottering régime, robbed of the glamour of victory and an early peace, to convince the apathetic German masses of the necessity of "sticking it." The natural reaction is: "stick it?—what for?"

In the minds of precisely those 80 per cent. of unpolitical Germans, the memory of the last World War is very much alive, as is the fact that the German army proceeded from victory to victory—only to be finally confronted with defeat. "The great number of our victories choked us in the end" proclaimed the Prussian war historians during all the years after 1918. This fear is prevalent in Germany to-day. For no longer do reports speak of the certainty of an outright victory. Many people in Germany—especially those connected with military circles—still hope for what they call a "decent" peace, which means to say that they expect to maintain Germany's present position in Europe, renouncing any dreams of conquest in Africa, Asia Minor, and South America. Those very circles, however, are quite conscious of the fact that such a peace is neither desired nor obtainable by the Party. Therefore, there will have to be a parting of the ways. And lo! there emerges the aim of the reactionary forces, the military clique, the landed gentry, and the heavy industries. That aim is, at least to save their own skins and positions for a future peace, if the war cannot be won.

On the occasion of Rudolf Hess's flight to England, I published an account of a detailed plan (received by me in April 1941) for the installing of a military dictatorship in Germany. The aim of this dictatorship was, and still is, to maintain the power of Prussianism in Germany by sacrificing the Hitler régime, and by making an early peace with England. I am still convinced that the mission of Hess stood in direct connection with this plan, Hess, as the representative of the Party, hoping instead to arrive himself at a peace with England, which peace was to entail the sacrifice of Russia. His failure proved that British and American policy cannot and will not make peace with the Nazi Party. That was also the conclusion the generals drew from Hess's failure, and they have since then been intensifying preparations—both within Germany and abroad—to launch their *coup d'état* at the right moment. It is not easy to predict when that moment will come. That depends on the Allies as much as on the war situation, on the activities of the police (the Gestapo in particular), and last, not least, on German public opinion. The Prussian reactionaries will certainly not undertake a *coup d'état* before a visible military defeat has convinced the majority of Germans that Hitler cannot win the war. They are far too clever to give anyone the opportunity of accusing them of a "stab in the back." On the contrary, they will endeavour to appear as the saviours of Germany. They will even avoid an open conflict with the Gestapo as long as possible. They are especially hard put to it to decide what will become of Hitler. Not that they feel themselves bound to the person of Corporal Hitler by any bonds of loyalty or gratitude. No, the problem of the generals is merely, whether or not it will be necessary to "take over" Herr Hitler. At present, the majority believe that it is necessary to do so, if only for the reason that it will be expedient to have him sign the death warrants of his former friends. In the long run, the Old Prussian forces are aiming for the re-establishing of a monarchy in Germany, possibly even of several monarchies, since it is certain that the cry of "Hohenzollern" will be answered by that of "Habsburg," and *vice versa*.

There is one other possible solution of the German problem—one that is at present being prepared in Germany proper. It is the German Revolution. This is the solution fought for by those 10 per cent. of the German people who are confirmed anti-Nazis, the men and women who for years have struggled against Hitler's régime—against the Party as well as against the Old Prussian reactionaries. Their struggle was inspired only in part by their hatred of the humiliations, the oppression, the destruction inflicted upon Germany by the Hitler system. Their strongest incentive was the will to build a better Germany in a better Europe. Conceptions of the final goal may have been nebulous at times—and the ways of approach to that goal may have differed widely. But the Opposition knows that this war represents the conflict of the ideas of "domination" and of "co-operation." It has chosen its stand, which is for "co-operation," and against "domination." Its fight against Hitlerism must therefore include the fight against Prussianism, because it sees in both the personifications of the idea of "domination," economical and cultural, at home and abroad.

We are working on all sides for this revolution against Hitler, for the destruction of his machine, for the demasking of the generals' clique. We are trying to wean away from the Nazis the 80 per cent. of unpolitical Germans, and to bring them to our side.

Without doubt, the attitude of British and American foreign policy will be a decisive factor in the solving of the German problem. The understanding—and the organised propaganda—of these powers will probably determine the time when either of the two solutions will be attempted.

But, whatever London and Washington are moved to decide upon, we are resolved to bring about the German Revolution—even in the face of an established military dictatorship—knowing full well that only a German Revolution can give us a new Germany—and with it, peace in our time.

DR. OTTO STRASSER

# A LONDON DIARY

*[We have asked Professor Laski to write A London Diary while "Critic" has a fortnight's rest. —ED., N.S. & N.]*

IT would, I think, be a useful experience if Mr. Churchill could spend an afternoon, as I did last Saturday, at a delegate conference of the Labour Party. His quick imagination would learn at first-hand the doubts and difficulties that are passing through the minds of hundreds of thousands of the people who give the solid basis to the resolution of this country. They want to know if he has given assurances to his supporters that he will accept no Socialist measures while he is Prime Minister. They resent his keeping Colonel Moore-Brabazon in office. They dislike the idea of industrial conscription for private factories; they would feel quite differently about it if their services were taken for industries under national ownership. Above all, they wonder whether he has really grasped the depth of their anxieties about post-war economic security, and understands how nearly that anxiety is related to war morale. His name still has a great magic even among people who do not share his opinions. But to judge from a good many experiences in recent months they feel that Mr. Churchill is unaware of their problems; that he looks at the war too much like a new Chatham, who has yet to be told that popular demand has given him his high place.

* * *

If I may judge from American papers (mid-November) which have just arrived, the general belief in the United States at that day was still that Japan would not dare to embark on the gamble of war. December 7th was a violent and immense awakening. No one who knows America but will realise two things. Its war effort will be on a scale far greater than that of any other power; and that part of the problem of mobilising resources which was due to the hatred of Big Business for the President will die a very swift death. The problem will be to preserve a sense of proportion in a people which has been made savagely angry by as treacherous a piece of infamy as even the Axis has so far organised. Japan and its allies have done what I do not believe ten years of our propaganda could have effected. They have killed the credit of all who have had any truck with isolationism by vindicating each phase of the President's approach to the war. Even Mr. Westbrook Pegler, who has written an almost daily hymn of hate against him for years, now sighs his relief that Mr. Roosevelt was given a third term.

* * *

I am sorry to hear that Ray Postgate is to leave the *Tribune* at the end of the year. He had made it a sparkling and significant commentary on events and men; among other things, he secured some of the most honest and pungent book-reviewing in London. I do not understand why the popular Labour weekly so seldom achieves a permanent place. When H. N. Brailsford had the *New Leader* he made it about the best paper the Socialist movement in this country has ever produced; too good, at any rate, for his directors to leave him in charge of it. Yet the Labour Party needs a really good weekly as it needs no other instrument of propaganda. And the working class is an avid consumer of pamphlets; probably no class buys more of them more constantly. If the stream from Transport House begins to slacken, there is always angry protest from the local parties.

* * *

I met last week at dinner the British officer who organised and led the Patriots' campaign in Abyssinia. For two hours I listened to a tale of epic quality. If ever good propaganda was given to us by the gods, this story was supreme propaganda; the tale, for example, of how 14,000 Italian troops were bluffed into surrendering to less than 2000 Patriots made one's blood tingle. But what is the Ministry of Information doing? Or the B.B.C.? Here is a story that ought to go round the world. It gives one an insight into the material at our disposal which inspires new confidence in the ultimate outcome. Why this epic should be reserved for a few dinner tables I cannot imagine. Nor do I understand why the methods which worked so superbly in Abyssinia have not relevance of vital importance to other theatres of war. What our Abyssinian Lawrence did with Haile Selassie's supporters, he is himself confident that he could do elsewhere. I noted with special interest his emphasis that in organising rebellion the organisers must (1) share the dangers the rebels run, and (2) keep their word to them after victory in itemised detail. In due course this officer will see a medical board. I should like to feel sure that he will see Mr. Eden and Sir Alan Brooke; and I think the Political Warfare Executive would learn a good deal about its job from a full and frank discussion with him.

* * *

The book situation goes from bad to worse; I am told that booksellers cannot fulfil about one in three of the orders they receive because the books, many of them essential textbooks, are out of print. Partly the fault lies with the Paper Controller, who seems unaware of the significance of books in the life of the nation and their importance as a medium of international intercourse. But I think the publishers and booksellers could unite to do something themselves. We might reasonably have a close season for, say, the next twelve months on books about astrology, the kind of "tough" fiction which skirts the boundaries of the pornographic, autobiographies of people under fifty, reminiscences of contact with the lesser royalties, and that frequent type of anthology which is mainly compounded out of other anthologies. Anyone who gets into a "remainder" bookshop will get ample evidence of massive and avoidable waste. I am not even sure that the clergy could not render a high national service by refraining from publishing their sermons until the war is over.

* * *

One of the people who have recently escaped from the clutches of the Nazis is the eminent Belgian lawyer and politician, M. Henri Rollin. He gives a heartening picture of peoples, both in Belgium and France, feverishly awaiting the turn of the tide. One does not know which to admire most, the loyalty of the friends who made possible his escape, or the unbreakable confidence of the common people of both countries that their liberation is certain. His tale is confirmed from other sources. And there is some evidence to show that the new phase of the war is providing new problems for Dr. Goebbels. The sense that the results of the Russian campaign do not conform to Hitler's promises has begun to bite deep, and the entrance of the United States has awakened grim memories of what that meant after 1917. It is believed that there has been a significant increase in the number of listeners to British broadcasts in recent weeks.

* * *

I was talking in the train the other day to a Canadian pilot on leave. His spare time, he said, was mostly given to reading; he was immensely interested in the history of science. I asked him what book had interested him most in recent months. His reply, given a little shyly, was *Pilgrim's Progress*. He had bought it between trains on the bookstall at Bletchley, and was, as he said, "thrilled" by it. He thought its style was "like an organ." He had been an automobile engineer in Western Canada before the war; he hoped to go in for aeronautical engineering when it was over. He was full of enthusiasm and ideas about what aviation could do for Ca[illegible]. The one thing he feared was that it might get into the hands of the Big Business interests in Canada. I suggested that it was time the workers in Canada became politically conscious. His reply rather startled me. "The C.P.R.," he said, "wouldn't let that happen."

* * *

When Mr. Churchill was fighting the Government of India Act in the House of Commons, he was never able to muster more than forty supporters in the lobby. Now that he is Prime Minister, he makes the Labour Ministers and Mr. Amery the silent accomplices of the reaction they formerly opposed so strongly. I doubt whether there has been a greater surrender than this in the war.

HAROLD J. LASKI

## THIS ENGLAND

**A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to C. J. Gellend.**

**Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.**

The B.B.C. has cancelled the performance of Puccini's opera *Mme. Butterfly*, which was to have been given next Wednesday.

No reason is given officially.

But it is the B.B.C.'s way of showing disapproval of Japan's aggression.—*Daily Herald.*

A headmistress wrote to the North Eastern District Education Committee yesterday saying she made girls scrub their tongues because "She had never known such an epidemic of bad language."

In a report to the Committee it was alleged that carbolic soap was used, and one father complained that his daughter's mouth was so sore that she could not eat.

The Committee left the matter with the school managers.—*News Chronicle.*

Christmas Day is very dear to vast numbers of Germans; so we can be sure that not even a Hitler would venture to outrage their convictions by sending an air fleet to bomb London, etc., on that day. Such a thing has not happened yet on a Christmas Day, and we can be reasonably sure it never will happen.—The *Times.*

An 89-year-old woman, Ellen Haworth, of Salesbury, near Blackburn, was stated at a Blackburn inquest yesterday to have never had a bath. The coroner said that her death from senility was accelerated by gross neglect.—*Manchester Guardian.*

The deadliest blow ever dealt by Germany to this country was its destructive criticism of the Old Testament.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Coming War-Christmas.—At this season nearly two thousand years ago something happened in the Near East (i.e., Palestine) which marked a new chapter in the history of mankind.

About 1941, or soon afterwards, other things are likely to happen in the Near East which will mark a new chapter in the present war.—"From the Stars Foretell," by R. H. Naylor, in *Sunday Express.*

Lord Foley, 18-years old and 6ft. 5in. in height, has written the words and music of a song, *Wishing You Well, Mr. Stalin.—Evening Standard.*

Don't bury your dead

PAPER

# OIL IN THE WAR AND AFTER—II

[This article is a continuation of the expert account of the oil industry which appeared in our issue of December 6th.]

At the present time the resources of the oil industry have been pooled, and the organisation is operated by the executives of the major companies. The independents are represented, but as they are a comparatively small proportion of the total oil trade the real control is in the hands of the representatives of the majors.

The profits of this organisation are distributed to the members of the Pool in the ratio of their pre-war quotas in the business. The direct fight between independents and majors has, therefore, for the time being, ceased. I believe that, on the whole, the parties to the agreement are satisfied with the financial returns they are receiving. The struggle between independents and majors now is mainly concerned with the position which will result at the end of the period of Pool control. It is realised that a control of the trade at the end of the period of pooling will be of great value. Before the war the independent petrol trader possessed his own distribution organisation; he bought his raw materials through various channels (mainly from the United States, but sometimes from other countries either through brokers or directly); he had contacts with the shipping companies who transported the products; he had his own technical services or arrangements for his technical services, and had a close contact with his clients. As a result of being in the Pool he has completely let down the people from whom he used to buy his petrol; he has no more contact with the shipping firms; his technical services have been completely disbanded; the whole of his analysis and cargo control is carried out by the staffs of the major companies operating within the Pool scheme, and there is little doubt that he is not in as close contact with his clients. After the war the major companies will have their own ships, their own laboratories, and the present sales contacts may be expected to remain in the hands of the majors. In other branches of the oil trade the position will be very similar. As there is little hope of the independents retaining much business after the dissolution of the Pool, there will be a temptation at the end of the war for the independent members of the Pool to desire a continuation of the scheme. Such a position raises some very interesting considerations.

The small oil man who used to struggle hard in order to sell his products and who made comparatively little profit owing to the expense of advertising and salesmanship, now finds that he can sit back in his chair and draw a profit on his quota. Many small men so placed quite naturally desire the present system to continue indefinitely; people possessing 1938 quotas could then retire and they and their descendants live happily ever after without further effort.

There has been a great deal of mutual admiration in the oil business for a number of years. This has been brought about by the extraordinary expansion of the industry and its great technical achievements. But its success and expansion are primarily due to the fact that oil is an extremely valuable material which can be obtained from the earth at comparatively small cost. Even to-day, after the very large expansions and technical improvements of the last two decades, it is still in an early stage of development. Oil possesses many advantages over its main competitor, coal.

To raise coal involves many times more effort per ton of material raised, and even when the product is on the surface you have a fuel of about two-thirds of the heat value of oil and one which is not nearly so amenable to handling or treatment. As a solid its value cannot approach that of a liquid even of the same heat value. In order to split it up into products, coal requires carbonisation plant and a vast amount of handling equipment, wherefrom the main yield is coke, a product of relatively small value, and the more valuable liquid part is only obtainable to the extent of less than 10 per cent. The oil is 100 per cent. liquid apart from the valuable accompanying gases, and its distillation is an extremely simple and cheap operation, the distillation of oil actually costing less than the carbonisation of the coal. These facts explain the richness, the expansion, and the enormous amount of research carried out in the oil business and the poor state of the coal industry.

In the future the oil industry will be of much greater importance than it is now. Research has rendered possible the synthetic preparation of a vast number of organic compounds from petroleum. It is a base for the manufacture of explosives, plastics, synthetic rubber, and a host of fine chemicals. This side of the industry is still in its infancy, and the next ten years will show really astonishing developments.

The use of petroleum as a base for synthetic chemistry was developed at a much later date than that of coal tar. This delay has been largely the result of the complex nature of crude petroleum and the comparative difficulty of separating the individual constituents. Recently, however, improvement in refinery equipment and the advancement of the technology of the cracking process have given means of producing pure bodies which lend themselves to chemical treatment. I consider that there is every indication that this new chemical industry will become much greater than the entire coal tar industry. The great advantage of petroleum over coal tar is that the former is available in much greater quantities and also at lower cost of production. A large proportion of this research work has been carried out during the last decade in the laboratories of the major oil companies, and they have shown great enterprise and expended large sums in this field.

Though this side of the industry is still in its early stages, it has already yielded special aeroplane fuels such as neohexane and iso-octane, also bases for explosives such as toluene and glycerine, synthetic rubber substitutes of great value, plastics, alcohols, esters, ketones, and other compounds which can be used as solvents and as a base for further chemical treatment.

I stress this new development because it affects the entire political position. Petroleum has for many years been of great national importance. For many years it has been the source of fuel for ships' bunkers, marine diesels, motor transport, aeroplanes and tractors, and lubricants which are required for all forms of mechanical contrivances. It has been the source of a host of other very important products, illuminating oils, solvents, insulators, road asphalts, transformer and medicinal oils. It will in future be practically impossible to retain a hold on the entire chemical industry without the foundation of petroleum. The development of the oil industry differs somewhat from the earlier developments in other industries, as nowadays practically all new processes are controlled by patents and are the result of research, experiment, and the use of very highly complex equipment. At the present time practically all the more important patents are held outside this country, and a very large proportion are in the hands of the international oil groups. Little of this class of research is carried out in this country, and practically all the best-quality equipment is made in the United States. To enter into this class of business now will be difficult, but it will be much more difficult to enter into this industry when it is further developed. A large proportion of the new petroleum processes are carried out at the refineries on bye-products resulting from refining operations. The home refining industry has received in the past no encouragement from the Government and there has been no general request for assistance, as the international groups possessing facilities in other countries are not particularly interested in refining in this country where taxation is comparatively high, whilst at present financiers prefer dollars to sterling.

If it is deemed advisable to develop petroleum refining and the accompanying synthetic industry in this country, the move will have to come from the Government, and the Government will have to employ its own technicians and its own economists to make a study of this question. The enlargement and modernisation of the refining industry could be made to provide work on a sound economic basis for the engineering trades, which will probably pass through a period of unemployment some time after munition production falls off.

There are many sides of the present set-up which may be criticised. In the production fields there has been enormous wastage. The present system in the United States of drilling large numbers of wells and then applying proration to avoid over-production is certainly very wasteful. The distribution system, though in some aspects technically efficient, is really extremely inefficient. For example, in this country in peacetime there are far too many petrol pumps, a great and quite unnecessary variety of different brands resulting in expensive competitive advertisement. There is great overlapping in the road transport, and undoubtedly a very great economy could be effected in peacetime by a central organisation, together with products sold to specification as during wartime. A pipeline system for the distribution of some of the products would have been a very great economy in peacetime and would have been of extreme value during the war. It would have relieved the load on road and rail transport, and should have reduced the shipping losses by reducing the amount of transport to the East Coast; also it would have simplified storage of war stocks of oil. Such developments could not take place under the pre-war system; the use of pipelines would have been prevented by the multitude of brands and also by other conflicting trade interests.

In the lubricating oil section of the trade the position is even worse. Motor oil reaching the public before the war was frequently five or six times the cost of the ingredients as received in this country. The cost of blending packages and transport are only a small part of this increase; most of this cost was advertisement, sales charges, and retailers' commission. The garage commission on certain branded lubricating oils was more than double the total cost of the oil as received in this country. To return to this state of affairs after the war would certainly be against the interests of the consuming public and a national calamity. X

# SICKERT IN LONDON

It was during the autumn of 1917 that I first met Sickert, when he invited me and another friend to "share a crust" with him in Whistler's studio, Fitzroy Street. We found our host in a vast, bare carpetless room engulfed in shadows, thick with dust and the odour of cigars, stacked with canvases and lit by the solitary ray of a bull's-eye lantern. He had achieved a queer sort of comfort, too. A horsehair sofa draped with his black Venetian cape stood beside the blazing fire; there were plenty of deep chairs, and a kettle singing on the stove. The reflection of his latest war picture, *Suspense*, swam in the dark depths of an enormous tarnished mirror on the opposite wall, and the memory of it haunts me still.

He talked about everything under the sun that afternoon. I have forgotten much of his conversation, but I remember that he was pre-

occupied with criminology and had been working recently on one of the Camden Town murders. We were more interested in his dramatic exposition of the subject than in the actual crime; he told his story with deadly effect, waving his hands to mark his points by the eerie glow of his lantern. Only unsolved crimes engaged his attention, for the solution of which he had endless plausible theories. But he was not always in such sober vein. We soon found that he had many moods—the man of letters, the painter, the wit, the philosopher, the teacher, the *homme du monde*, all followed each other in quick succession. His dress varied accordingly; at one moment he was the Bohemian in open shirt, tweed trousers and his beloved carpet slippers, the next the dandy with immaculate morning coat, gloves and cane. These kaleidoscopic changes were bewildering, as was his habit of reviewing his friends, like his gods, in strict rotation. They formed a sort of giant circle around which Sickert revolved methodically, adding another figure to the circle from time to time, but always returning to it and savouring in turn the personages of whom it was composed. He had his Burns days, his Byron days, his Whistler days, and when his own good nature had involved him with a bore whose visits, in spite of marked hints, appeared interminable, he would murmur: "What would Byron have said to this infliction? He would never have permitted it for an instant." On such occasions it was wiser not to laugh.

He told us that he had tried to join up in 1914 and was mortified to find himself rejected on account of his age, but by this time he was resigned to watch and wait and had completed his series of war pictures, beginning with *Tipperary*. Sickert did more for the war effort than expressing it in paint. He was deeply interested in the younger generation, perhaps more than is generally realised, although his efforts on behalf of the East London Group and Art Schools all over the country are well known. During the war years his studios in Fitzroy Street were swarming with khaki. Sickert gave these boys not only his models, paints and brushes without thought of payment, but his time, brains and energy in unstinting measure. They might receive drastic criticisms and robust reproofs, but they also received encouragement and support, and they never hesitated to approach him. Sometimes, however, his patience was sorely strained. Once in desperation he asked a very dull student: "Didn't Professor Tonks tell you *anything* when you were at the Slade?" The young man thought for some time, and then answered: "He said that my drawings made him sick." "Alas!" sighed Sickert. "He should have analysed the vomit."

In spite of these interruptions, Sickert was working constantly: in the street, during meals, in the omnibus, far into the night. He seemed to need the barest minimum of sleep, declaring that every painter should be up by six, and he practised what he preached. He generally rose about five, and by seven was ready for his daily dip in St. Pancras Baths. After his swim he returned to the studio to receive friends to breakfast, cooked by himself, followed by a perusal of the *Times*, and then to work again. His cooking was somewhat erratic. He maintained that a boiled egg should only be "*shown* the fire," and how frequently have I tried politely to consume a practically raw egg without revealing the discomfort I really felt!

I think this was the most creative period of Sickert's life. Much has been said of his Venetian and Dieppe periods and of the influences of Degas and Whistler—the Venetian period was especially prolific, as he was then composing pictures at the rate of twelve per month—but these influences have been overstressed. He absorbed many styles, but remained himself. From Degas he gained spontaneity and his audacious rhythms; his technique was French in its insistence on surface quality, a point on which British artists have been notoriously careless, but he had his own intense personal reaction to the world around him. The real Sickert is surely the interpreter of Cockney London. From his father he inherited the intuition and sensibility of two generations of painters, from his mother the sturdy tradition of Hogarth and Rowlandson and Dr. Johnson.

If there is a literary streak in his pictures they are none the worse for that. As Sir Kenneth Clark has pointed out: "We are, after all, a literary people, and we should not complain when our painting reflects this side of our character."

Probably only a native of London could have the profound intimacy that he portrays in his studies of Camden Town. He knew the district by heart and was never tired of pointing out to us some secret and forgotten crescent, coiled in the labyrinth of the northern slums, or the melancholy silhouette of old squares in Islington, transformed by the light of his eager spirit from squalor to romance. Those bleak interiors shadowed by Venetian blinds with recumbent forms on iron bedsteads were all painted from scenes in this part of the city. The well-known *Ennui* in the Tate Gallery was inspired by a singularly dingy first-floor back in Hampstead Road. All visitors to the Tate have seen the man smoking in the foreground, the woman drooping listlessly over the chest-of-drawers, even the matchbox on the table exuding boredom. Sickert was so swept away by *Ennui* that he forgot to eat a square meal for days together, and slept on the kitchen table in the grim house until he felt he had exhausted all the possibilities of his theme. When at last he staggered to his favourite restaurant, the waiter, an old ally, remarked: "What you want, sir, is a good beefsteak"—and ran off to provide it for him.

This was also the period of the music-hall series. Collins's, at Islington, was a favourite haunt, and here Sickert would attend, night after night, until he knew all the turns by heart. Sometimes weeks had passed before he pounced on his subject—a chance combination of figures flitting across the stage, the spotlight on a solitary performer, the loneliness of a stray onlooker hovering in the great shabby boxes upheld by soaring caryatids—when with lightning speed he would jot down information in a notebook, registering the rest in his mind. This kind of shorthand notation that he had developed was worked up in the studio afterwards, often on an imposing scale. His intellectual powers were revealed by his ability to construct large pictures from preliminary studies, to unify the colour and sustain the vitality of the sketch in his final version. He might paint from notes of a subject that he had not seen for years, but although he would meditate at length before beginning a picture, when completed it had no further interest for him, and he was so critical that many canvases were left unfinished or destroyed because they fell short of his exacting standard. Important pictures were presented to friends, even acquaintances if they happened to take his fancy, and are still lurking in improbable places; others are in private collections. He was equally careless with his writings, and I do not know what became of a bulky volume of essays called *Leaves from Cumberland Market*, wherein he discoursed on life and painting, from "Exhibititis," the mania of amateurs to appear in public exhibitions, to "the Super Goose," a description of some of the more affected partners he had endured at dinner parties.

When painting portraits he seldom posed his models; he waited for a characteristic movement, a revealing look or gesture, then seized and intensified it. He probed the depths of feminine temperament with sympathetic insight; however drab, however sorry, always there is that emotional emphasis that transmutes the sitter from prose to poetry. His male studies were sometimes more brusquely handled, and when George Moore saw the head of himself, now in the possession of the Tate Gallery, he protested: "But you have made me look a fool, Walter! And I cannot be a fool, for I have written *Esther Waters!*"

His wit has been called cruel; well, perhaps. Painting was so serious a business for him that it is not altogether surprising if he mocked at those whom he suspected of insincerity. At this time he was in a somewhat peculiar position. Already a legend in Bloomsbury, the chosen leader of the schools, the painter's painter, his immediate influence was still restricted to a narrow circle. His pictures were bought by a select few, but for years he was not enjoyed by the multitude he so longed to reach and who had evoked his deepest sympathies. His radiant humour and zest for life were misleading; strangers saw him as the triumphant artist revelling in popular as well as spiritual success, but he was now over fifty and secretly wounded by the indifference of the British public. I have a vivid recollection of him when he was completing a picture of which he was especially fond, a churchyard scene. Shuffling up and down in his carpet slippers, whistling and humming old music-hall ditties happily under his breath, and scratching at his beloved picture with a derelict brush from which most of the hairs had long since vanished, he would stop at intervals to murmur solemnly the poem of Emily Bronte:

> "Cold is the earth and fifteen wild Decembers
> From those brown hills have melted into Spring . . ."

His method of painting was simple. The design of his picture was enlarged from drawings on to the canvas, which was then usually prepared with an under-painting of Indian red and white. This was allowed to dry thoroughly, so that when he applied the local colours, to quote his own words, it was like mixing "butter into granite." He scrubbed the paint in vigorously, wearing his brushes down to the ferule, and in his excitement sometimes working on with the tin. He abhorred the dull, greasy surface that ensues from fumbling and corrections, dismissing it scornfully as "linoleum." He achieved luminosity not only by subtle gradations of tone, but by the nervous, incisive pressure of the brush, affirming that the ideal texture of paint resembled "the side of a matchbox," rich, brittle and scintillating. From material that most artists, be they painters or writers, would find refractory he has wrested something of real significance. How has he done it?

MARJORIE LILLY

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

### "Dumbo," at the New Gallery

Paintpots and pens have been busy in the Disney factory again, and this time brows are low. No Bach or Stravinsky, no poetry of motion, no dilly-Dali, no headaches for anyone; *Dumbo* is unpretentious fun with a whirl of invention that delights and lifts. This fairy tale of a circus creates an elephant world at least the equal of Babar's: elephants being squeezed into property vans, elephants with little boudoir caps, elephants expecting the stork, elephants singing lullabies, elephants that call one another "dearie" and put their heads together with tea-time accents—"Girls, have I a trunkful of dirt!" At times fantasy rises to dizzy heights, and we see elephants building themselves into a Pisa tower and tumbling madly apart; an elephant who has drunk too much champagne dreams of pink elephants (a brilliant use, this, of surrealism). And Dumbo himself is an appealing baby elephant with enormous ears that are his tragedy until he learns to fly with them. The other characters—all new—are hardly less delightful: a new mouse, the postman stork delivering babies, the negro chorus of crows, the various circus animals, and the shrugging and muttering engine ("Casey Jnr.") of the train they all travel in. The catchiest of tunes complete this perfect Christmas treat.

# Correspondence

## CONSCRIBING PROPERTY

SIR,—Mr. L. J. Cadbury has put the telescope to his blind eye when he says: "the control of manpower will be only for the duration, the ownership (of property) would be in perpetuity, a very different matter." The conscription of a man is not, as he implies, merely a claim on that man's person and powers for the duration. It is a claim that he shall die, if necessary; it is indeed in perpetuity. Has Mr. Cadbury forgotten that nearly a million British young men died in the last war? And that "property" was left richer than before?

What Mr. Cadbury is interested in is the post-survival of industry with full enjoyment of its present powers. Will he guarantee that to our young sons who are now being conscripted or to succeeding generations of young men?

Finally it is worth while to remember that the only people who have adopted state ownership of the means of production, are, so far, the only people who have licked Hitler. N. K. WELLS

Holywood, Park Town, Oxford.

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SIR,—Mr. L. J. Cadbury's letter on this subject effectively reveals the tremendous gulf which separates the point of view of the ordinary citizen and that of the small group of industrial magnates, highly placed Civil Servants, Ministers of the Crown and Members of Parliament, who control and direct our war effort.

With reference to the conscription of life the ordinary citizen feels that, despite a good deal of wire-pulling by powerful individuals and interests, a reasonable measure of equality of sacrifice exists as between rich and poor.

With reference to property, however, he feels two things. First, that the success of our war effort is being imperilled by the inability of the magnates, who constitute the various Supply "controls," to sacrifice their own and their shareholders' interests for the national cause.

Secondly, there is a widespread conviction that, unless drastic measures of nationalisation are carried through *during* the war, the ordinary citizen will find himself saddled, at the end of this war as he did at the end of the last, with an overwhelming burden of War Debt interest, for the benefit of another generation of "hard-faced" men who have done well out of yet another war.

R. ST. JOHN READE

## THE STALIN-SIKORSKI AGREEMENT

SIR,—"Critic" is right in calling attention to the importance of the Sikorski-Stalin meeting in Moscow. But he appears to have been seriously misinformed as to the contents of the Stalin-Sikorski Declaration, and in consequence draws deductions which are very far from correct. "Sikorski is clearly a very considerable man;" agreed, but he is not a Quisling, and he does not propose to place his or any other country of Eastern Europe under the hegemony of Soviet Russia. Such a proposal would immediately provoke the retort from the subjected countries of that area that they are not fighting to free themselves from one hegemony only to put themselves directly under another.

Neither in the Sikorski-Stalin Declaration nor in General Sikorski's speech is there a single reference to "Eastern Europe" or "Eastern Germany." Point two of the Declaration, after referring to the question of mutual help in wartime, states that in peacetime the relations between the two states will be based on the principles of harmonious, neighbourly co-operation, friendship, and mutual sincere observance of the obligations entered into by both sides. Point three declares that the task of the Allied states, after the adequate punishment of the German criminals, is to ensure a lasting and just peace. "This can be achieved only by way of a new organisation of international relations, based on the union of the democratic countries and a permanent alliance."

In his broadcast speech General Sikorski did not depart from, but merely enlarged, on the principles laid down in the Declaration. And in a speech at the reception after the signing ceremony Stalin expressed the conviction that after the war Poland will be stronger than ever before, and proposed a toast in honour of a free, independent, and powerful Poland.

From the terms of the Declaration and the speeches the obvious deductions are therefore that Soviet Russia makes no attempt to claim any kind of hegemony over Poland or any other States of Eastern Europe, and that Stalin lines up the U.S.S.R. behind the Churchill-Roosevelt Atlantic Charter. In other words for the purpose of wartime and post-war negotiations and arrangements Stalin on behalf of the Soviet Union holds to the principle that the U.S.S.R. is a sovereign state equal with the other sovereign States fighting Germany, but makes no special claims either of an imperialistic or of an international socialist nature. In passing, it may be worth while pointing out that the Declaration, in accordance with recent Soviet home and foreign propaganda, shifts the emphasis from "Hitlerite Germany" to Germans generally. The significance of this hardly calls for explanation.

Critic's deductions from apparently second-hand information as to the text of the Declaration are irresponsible and mischievous.

265 Salmon Street, N.W.9 STEPHEN GARRY

["Critic" wrote "Slav," which unfortunately appeared as "Soviet," hegemony. He had in mind the agreement between Czechs and Poles as well as that between Poles and Russians, and meant to suggest that this would be a joint Slav victory in the historic struggle between Slav and Teuton. He suggested no false dealing on the part of Stalin or anybody else, but he did intend to emphasise that in the coming peace no "buffer belt," such as is still oddly discussed in some quarters, is on the cards. On this occasion Poland and Russia are allies and will be together in victory. Russia, as the more powerful State, must have the greater influence throughout Eastern Europe, whatever form of European or World federation is adopted.—ED., *N.S.&N.*]

## RETRIBUTION

SIR,—I am afraid that "Norwegian" is unfamiliar with Mr. Churchill's record in this connection, or he would not assume that by Retribution he meant Justice. I was present only two or three years before this war at a meeting in Mr. Churchill's constituency at which he solemnly declared that he still believed Germany to have been solely responsible for the last war, and implied, if he did not state in so many words, that the Treaty of Versailles was just retribution. And that is how practically all Germans, and most other Europeans, will understand the word.

The Nazis' victims will in most cases take vengeance on their oppressors, and nowhere more certainly than in Germany itself, where even before the war hundreds of petty tyrants, as well as big ones, went in continual fear of assassination. When that time comes it is inevitable, though regrettable, that many innocent people will suffer, but such indiscriminate vengeance will be encouraged, rather than averted, by Mr. Churchill's promise of Retribution.

If Hitler and the rest escape this vengeance, by all means let them be tried for their crimes, but it must be by legally constituted courts of their country, whose laws they have broken. To hale them before a foreign court would be simply to make martyrs of them, and so sow the seed of yet another war.

Surely by now Christendom might have learnt that no peace is possible on the basis of Retribution, but only on that of mutual forgiveness.

SCOTT BAYLISS

## CHILD CONSCRIPTION

SIR,—Mr. D. N. W. Irwine's letter of last week on "Child Conscription" calls attention to the possibility that we in this country may be moving towards that corruption of the minds of the young which has been one of the most appalling aspects of the Nazi system in Germany. There are, also, other aspects which may follow from the Government's expressed intention to "encourage" the military training of the very young.

The school-leaving age in this country is so low that most boys leave school having gained only a rudimentary grasp of education, little more than the usual three Rs. Real education in the true sense of the word only begins at fourteen, all that boys have learnt in their earlier years having been but a preparation for education proper. Secondary and university education which are entrusted with the real tasks of education, the development of character and the widening of the mind in a liberal manner (that realisation of spiritual values which Plato held to be the proper work of education) will be grievously curtailed, leaving us with a generation possessed of only the barest rudiments of learning, and grown to physical manhood having had no real education in its most formative years.

Indeed the danger is that these formative years having been spent in the Home Guard or Cadet Corps will breed a generation which after the war, having received only a training in the more brutal side of a sad military necessity, will view peace with actual distaste. Unless we continue to give at least some proportion of our boys a liberal education the future will be very dark. LUCY A. JOHNSON

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N.W.11.

## PAKISTAN

SIR,—My *bonne-a-tout-faire*, who (having been forcibly evacuated to Southampton instead of, as she thought, Brest) has no use for English ways, has put the last number of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION into the dustbin, and I can't, therefore, find the Edward Thompson letter which I want to answer. Nevertheless, with your kind permission I must answer it, because Edward Thompson, who is my very good friend, is becoming a positive menace. There is, I have now concluded, no Indian political issue upon which Edward Thompson has not got a Personal Letter from the Highest Authority which contradicts, of course, everyone else. I do plead with him to publish this evidently enormous dossier. In this instance he says that Sir Mohammed Iqbal wrote a Personal Letter saying that he (Sir Mohammed) was a mountebank, who thought Pakistan would be disastrous for everybody, but had to support it because he was President of the Muslim League. Well, God bless me, I haven't any Personal Letters, but I did have the honour of meeting Iqbal and I find this mountebankery very hard to swallow. Next, Edward Thompson seems to know that Ambedkar (whose book I reviewed) never believed in Pakistan, and only does so now, if he does at all, because he has made a pact with the Muslims and because, anyhow, he doesn't care a damn about the North of India. Well, I can only suppose that Edward Thompson hasn't read the book. Last, peoples are not separated, according to Thompson, because they don't intermarry; and "one doesn't notice" much intermarriage between Catholics and Protestants. *Recommended*—a visit to Somerset House and Mr. Thompson's great knowledge and able brain, when not prejudiced. I am all for the whole world becoming a nation, but if Mr. Thompson wants to push one-nationhood on to two peoples who neither intermarry, eat the same food, worship the same God, use the same language, or wear the same dress, and to push it by the domination of one which happens to be more numerous, why on earth not try the much simpler and easier problem of pushing Federation on to an intermarrying habit-sharing Europe, under the numerical domination of Germans.

LIONEL FIELDEN

## TRELAWNY

SIR,—Mr. Rowse's natural sympathy with Trelawny as a Cornishman and a rebel makes him exaggerate his hero's veracity. He says he couldn't write about anything but what actually happened and that where it is possible to test him he passes the test. As regards the *Adventures* it is very rarely possible to test their truth, but in the rare instances where it is Trelawny is clearly romancing. To give two examples: he and his girl wife Zela arrive in Borneo, where they amuse themselves with tiger shooting on such a scale that it might have been partridges. Now tigers do not go about in coveys, and, worse than that, *there are no tigers in Borneo!* Again he writes of the high serrated outline of the Malayan coast opposite Penang. But the coast of the mainland is there as flat as a billiard table! When one is miles out at sea and the coastline has disappeared the distant mountain backbone of the Malay Peninsula is alone visible and appears high and serrated. One hopes this in reality was the nearest he got to Penang, for then his cowardly and unprovoked murder of the goldsmith, which fully justifies Mr. Harold Nicolson's remarks, never in fact happened.

The *Recollections* are of a far higher order.

DAVID FREEMAN

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SIR,—Mr. Rowse in his article on Trelawny writes that if the *Adventures of a Younger Son* "had been included in Everyman's Library or the World's Classics it would have been more widely known than it is." But it was included in the World's Classics in 1925 and it has been in print and on sale ever since.

Oxford University Press, H. S. MILFORD
Amen House, London, E.C.4.

## BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE admirers of Fielding to-day are a declining minority. A generation ago he was held up to the reader as one of the pleasant things in store for you after you had reached the age of consent, and there were critics like Dobson and Saintsbury to expand upon him over their wine. His reputation will, of course, rise again as times change; but, for a good many years now, and chiefly because of the English novelist's very feminine preoccupation with sex and psychology, Richardson's stock has risen and the masculine tradition of Fielding has given way. There are other difficulties. When we admire realism in the eighteenth-century novel we turn rather to Defoe's ungarnished reporting than to the glow of Fielding's stylish and virile imagination. In their rebellion against the hyperbole of the earlier romances, which had been imitated from France, the early Augustans parodied the heroic. This gave a basis of sense to their elegant writing, but it starved sensibility; there is something conventional, complacent, something of the presumptuous lackey, in that accomplished prose. At its best it was a proper vehicle for the period's urgent concern with manners; at its worst it exposes the shallowness of the belief that the most serious things in life were merely aspects of behaviour in which you acted or did not act as a man of honour or a woman of discretion. Here, I think, rather than in his heartiness or in his weakness for the towny and low view of human nature, lies one of the explanations of Fielding's unpopularity. There is no bore like the man's man, the man of the world; his world turns out to be a box of tricks; nor is there any philosophy so limited as the one which, proposing to interpret the depths of human nature, takes us ankle-deep and tells us men are not what they seem, and that self-love and self-interest are the beginning and end of human motives.

There is another difficulty, and I put it as one who does not share the general dislike of Fielding. *Jonathan Wild*, for example, seems to me one of the greatest and most readable of English novels, one of the diamonds of our literature. The difficulty is that in Fielding you are haunted by almost the whole of the English novel. Acres of Dickens, Thackeray, Meredith, even, incongruously, of Kipling, Galsworthy and Wodehouse, become confused with the view. Fielding has the disadvantage of being the ancestor. Not only do you pick out the perennial characters of the main part of English fiction, but he has set many of its idiosyncrasies and limits. Sociable man, social problems, middle-class humour, the didactic habit, the club culture, the horseplay, the gregarious rather than the single eye, the habit of treating country life as an opportunity for the exercise of the body or of the fancy as though Nature were a mixture of gymnasium and an open-air extension of the Established Church—these are some elements which have continued in the English novel and which date from Fielding. The geniality of his expression of one kind of Englishness is such, indeed, that many critics—Sir Hugh Walpole was one—seemed to think that conservative sociability or what is called "the creation of character" was all that the English tradition meant; that people who spoke of the novel as something inspired by ideas or concerned with a sense of the real situation of society, were importing tendentious and arid continental ideas. If these critics had considered Fielding's work they could never have made such a wild statement. Fielding was an old Etonian, but he was one of Eton's recalcitrants, sneered at and, in the end, pursued because he let the side down. The fact is that, from the beginning, the English novel set out to protest and to teach. Its philanthropic campaigns in the nineteenth century are paralleled in the eighteenth century by its avowed desire to reform the brutal manners of the age.

The explanation is not necessarily that there has been an extra allowance of public spiritedness in our novelists; it is simply that the crucial problems of his own time provide a novelist with his richest material, whether he deals with it directly or by inference. The reform of manners was as vital in the eighteenth century as the reform of the Poor Law was in the nineteenth. When Fielding and Richardson filled their novels with abducted heiresses, Tammany law, bribed judges, faked weddings, duels in Hyde Park, with squalid fights between half-naked women in Gin Alley or on the village commons, and scoundrelly nincompoops, bailiffs and middle men from the Coffee House and the Court, they were not amusing themselves with the concoctions of artificial comedy. They were attacking the criminal violence and corruption that underlay the elegance of the time. There was a plea for the middle-class virtues at a time when the aristocracy had left the land for the Court and abandoned its responsibilities in order to milk the Exchequer. Public societies for the Reform of Manners had existed in the early part of the century. Fielding spent his writing life fighting abuses and ended as a most excellent Bow Street magistrate, trying to clean up the London streets. "Great characters" there are in all his books, but they are inseparable from a formal pattern which is dominated by certain strong views about Society.

In his essay on his own work Fielding always said that he drew from life. But like Cervantes, whom he hoped to copy, and whom he so much admired, Fielding had been trained as a writer in the theatre. The English novel was not a development from the reporting of Defoe, a way of writing which, of its nature, is prevented from development. In the end the reporter can do no more than cover more and more ground; his method gives him nothing to till the ground with. Fielding took his slice of life, his chains of picaresque episode which in *Joseph Andrews* had made a promising but inferior version of *Gil Blas*, and let the artifice of the theatre break them up and rebuild them. The English novel started in *Tom Jones*, because the stage taught Fielding how to break the monotony of flat, continuous narrative. The methods of the theatre are abstract and summary; there is an idea before there is a scene; and one of the fascinating things in *Tom Jones* is the use of the summary method to set the scene, explain the types of character, cover the preparatory ground quickly by a few oblique moralisings and antics so that all the realism is reserved for the main action. Is Tom Jones a loyal and honest man? Could he be otherwise if circumstances tempt him? No great paraphernalia of dialogue and literal detail has to be used to introduce such questions. Fielding puts them, then illustrates with action, and frames the whole in brief commentary. Scenes do not ramble on and melt into each other. They snap past, sharply divided, wittily contrasted, cunningly balanced. The pace of *Tom Jones* is as fast as farce, and indeed only a theatre man's expertness in the dramatic, the surprising, the situation capped and recapped, could cover the packed intrigue of the narrative. The theatre taught Fielding economy. It taught him to treat episodes as subjects and not as simple slices of life. Thackeray, who is the only English novelist to have learned from *Tom Jones*—Dickens learned from the inferior middlebrow *Amelia*, which has much more of the drudging realism of the later English novel—developed this method of Fielding's in *Vanity Fair*, going backwards and forwards in time, as well as to and fro in moral commentary. The difference is that Thackeray was born in the time of the sermon, and Fielding in the time of the chorus and aside.

Fielding's own ancestor is Ben Jonson. Coleridge compared the formal excellence of *Tom Jones* with that of *The Alchemist*. The satire in both writers is meaty and brainy, very packed and prolific in ridiculous situations. To every character life is surprising and Fortune perverse. In the love-chase of Sophia Western and Tom Jones, there is the familiar stage situation that when one is willing the other is not available; yet this does not strain psychological probability. He is a healthy young rake who does not intend to be one, and he reads a severe lecture to Nightingale, the professional seducer who is merely satisfying sexual vanity. In the picaresque novels there is growth or decline in fortune, but rarely is there growth in character; but in *Tom Jones*, Partridge grows once he has got rid of his wife. Sophia, in London, learns to tell a lie to her rival—for which one admires her as much as when she comes head first off the horse—and Tom himself passes from the loyal to the careless and, after the shock of being caught out in his infidelities at Upton, into Tom the frantic who will commit any folly. He is in a real, young-man's muddle by the time he is mixed up with Lady Bellaston. This intrigue is the one in which first her ladyship and then the lady's maid are hidden behind the curtain in Tom's room, a piece of ruffing and cross-ruffing which comes straight from the theatre; it *does* strike one as artificial, but Fielding brings the whole intrigue to earth, by the brilliant short chapter which introduces Mrs. Hunt. Many critics have objected to this chapter as a loose end; but the naive proposal of marriage from someone to whom Tom has never spoken comes out of the blue almost affectingly. It is a *cri de coeur* among a lot of sharp practice, something beautifully silly in an ill-natured episode.

By the time he wrote *Amelia*, Fielding seems to have lost the heat of the theatre's inspiration and, perhaps, even belief in it. The first chapter in the prison is in the old manner but presently the narrative dawdles. In this book the didactic intention is open; there is indignation where before there was irony. The old comic gift comes out in Colonel Bath's duel, and Miss Matthews, the would-be murderess, is a development from the drawing of that hard old rip, Lady Bellaston. There are hints of psychological obliquity in this book. Tom repents of his sins and forgets them. He means no harm, he says, they are his nature. Mr. Booth broods. (He's a married man, of course.) It is Miss Matthews who makes the celebrated remark about the attraction of prudes; do they attract, she asks, because they appear to cool the heat of love? Miss Matthews is devastating. One is glad the Colonel would not drop his whore; delighted, though Fielding does not seem to be, that she grew fat. She would obviously not mind being fat. The subtle influence of Mr. Booth's affair with Miss Matthews on his relations with other people long afterwards, is the beginning of a psychological vein in Fielding which before was confined to moral types. It marks a decline from the brilliant fusing of gifts in the earlier book, but it points to the way the English novel was bound to go.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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**Measure for Murder.** By CLIFFORD WHITING. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 8s. 3d.

**Dagger of the Mind.** By KENNETH FEARING. *Lane.* 7s. 6d.

The best detective problems are those in which the number of suspects is strictly limited to a confined area, such as an island, a ship in mid-ocean, an oasis in the desert, or (the world

favourite) an isolated country house surrounded by deep snow. This last situation has almost become a ritual; and we watch the first snowflakes descending round the Christmas house-party with the same thrill that Black feels when White moves Pawn to King 4. But one such arbitrary localisation has never hitherto, to my knowledge, attracted our authors' attention—a prison. Perhaps they were too ignorant of prison routine to make use of the idea, if it did occur to them. But Mr. Jim Phelan seems to have spent his life inside a prison, until he started writing detection. The description of Rockville, the scene of *Murder By Numbers*, provides as much knowledge of the curriculum of a gaol as any of us are likely to gain, short of serving time at Princetown. In prisons, as one might expect, there rages an eternal battle between the cunning of the prisoners and the wits of the warders. But there is an even greater conflect between the dehumanised regulations, supposed to control every action of every inmate (including the governor and warders), and the human beings subjected to these rules. The warders escape from their emotional starvation in their time off, outside the prison gates; the prisoners do the same by gossiping at night from the windows of their cells, by smuggling meaningless notes, by making plans to escape, by brutalising or informing on each other, by hysterical outbursts of savagery, or simply by going mad and fancying themselves Jesus Christ or Napoleon. In such a strictly supervised community the reader may wonder how Mr. Phelan manages to engineer murder—and not one murder but four—until he learns that the prisoners are all amply provided with sail needles in their working hours. With those, and safety razor blades surreptitiously fitted into appropriate handles, a lot of mischief can be done. The plot itself is patchy, with brilliant strokes of ingenuity marred by dubious passages, only to be accounted for by gaol hysteria. But the working out of the plot is wildly exciting, as sail needle follows sail needle. And the process of deduction is a long exercise in logic but in essence delightfully simple, as the prison files contain all the necessary data. *Murder By Numbers* is one of the best detective stories of the year.

The remainder of the detective list is only moderate. Miss Mary Fitt is rather a sprightly writer but very feminine. She enjoys drawing characters, fancies herself at dialogue, and scamps the dreary business of trying to puzzle readers with alibis, clues, time-tables, and all the rest of the detective paraphernalia. When the body of a brilliant but unbalanced young inventor is found in the boathouse beside Heron's Mere before breakfast, how is she to bring all sorts of unlikely people into the vicinity without their all meeting? Oh, some can go by boat and some one side of the lake and some the other; and a heavy morning mist will prevent them seeing each other, and then it can lift just enough to confirm someone's alibi when wanted. The detective plot of *Death on Heron's Mere* is as naive as that and perfunctory, but some of the characters are amusing enough in a slight way.

*Death of a Decent Fellow* is another alibi plot. Young Lord Milverston is shot in a clearing in the woods at 3.28 p.m. precisely, during the usual fog. Five other members of the house-party and one member of the lower classes have been out in the fog at the time, each with some sort of a motive to eliminate his lordship. Mr. Temple Ellis skilfully uses a thimble-rigging technique, and the pea is naturally under the most unlikely of his six thimbles. But his narrative is long-winded, his detective a ninny and a solution would be out of the question if it were not for the redeeming presence of an attractively tough young lady, who miraculously divines the criminal. "Divines" is appropriate, as the villain's motive is inconceivable by the laws of common sense.

In *The Dark Garden* we have to pick our way through some very dense undergrowth, an almost impenetrable thicket of cross-purposes, to reach our destination. Mr. Punshon's workmanship is always conscientious but rarely stimulating. He has little grasp of character and small ear for dialogue, and he forces the machinery of his plots to revolve by sheer will-power. They may creak and groan, but they do eventually grind out an appropriate solution. As the Frenchman replied to the King of Bavaria, when asked if he liked turkey:—"*Sire, je ne l'aime pas—mais je le respecte.*"

Now let us give short shrift to the Fifth Column. Mrs. Christie has succumbed to the inevitable. That sentimental couple, Tommy and Tuppence, are resurrected to carry on the good work of counter-espionage which they started in *Partners in Crime* in the last war. *N or M* deals with the unearthing of The Menace at a South Coast resort in June, 1940. It is exciting, full of surprises, laced with sentiment, and as good a Fifth Column thriller as is likely to be written. Now, I trust, Mrs. Christie will return to Poirot and business.

*They Watched By Night* tries to confuse the issue by superimposing spies on murderers. Jimmy Waghorn tries to identify the signaller to the enemy, while Dr. Priestley locates the murderer. The result is rather a muddle and not very interesting. Mr. Rhode has, however, thought out a new method of murder in the black-out which is too easy for our peace of mind. We can't be sure of having Dr. Priestley at hand when the bombers come over.

*Measure For Murder* combines amateur theatricals with enemy agents in an unconvincing manner. The first half of the book is the diary of an estate agent at Pulverton, who was responsible for starting the Pulverton Amateur Dramatic Society. The small-town intrigues and rivalries are described with almost too much gusto, but our hopes of a good detective plot rise when the charwoman at the Little Theatre finds a body. The second part of the book solves the murder with increasing dreariness, as we realise the aforesaid enemy agents are knocking about. Quotations from *Measure For Measure* at the head of each chapter only add to the general air of incongruity.

*Dagger of the Mind* is a quasi-tough American story of murder in an artists' colony, where drink and sex have fortunately not yet been superseded by preoccupation with parachutists, and people still have leisure enough to suffer from hangovers and neuroses. There is an absence of wisecracks and only one punch on the nose, but it will have to serve, as the supply of bourbon is running out.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

## AFTER EMERSON

**New England: Indian Summer.** By Van Wyck Brooks. *Dent.* 18*s.*

In *The Flowering of New England* Mr. Van Wyck Brooks wrote a history of American literature from 1819 to the Civil War; his new book continues the narrative from 1865 to 1915. But in this latter period the literature of New England is no longer almost coextensive with the literature of the United States. Boston has lost its primacy; the Yankees have been overwhelmed by Irish immigrants, who imposed a silly censorship of books; and even among the remaining aristocrats the old Yankee passion for justice has decayed. It was a Brahmin of the Brahmins who finally decided that Sacco and Vanzetti should be murdered.

To the English reader many of the authors considered in this book are hardly even names. Fiske and Aldrich, Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins, Bellamy and Pumpelly; but Mr. Brooks retains our interest when describing them no less than in his accounts of Henry Adams, Emily Dickinson, Henry James and Mr. Eliot. Often he tempts one to repair one's ignorance, but this is not easy: I looked vainly in the catalogue of the London Library for a book of which he gives a most alluring description, Higginson's *Army Life in a Black Regiment*. I wish an English publisher would make it available.

After the Civil War the culture of New England changed its character; there was discouragement instead of confidence, neurosis instead of health. Developing the natural resources of a continent, the Americans could not help becoming money-minded; men ceased to read, and culture dwindled into a feminine monopoly, like embroidery or arranging flowers


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JONATHAN CAPE

Greek and Latin ceased to be the staples of education. Such finely gifted authors as Howells knew that almost all their readers would be women, and wrote accordingly. Moreover, whereas the older generation had all been deeply rooted in the soil, the epigoni cared and knew little about nature. For refreshment they took refuge not in a log-cabin among the lakes and forests, but in the hotels of Europe. This diagnosis of Mr. Brooks is no doubt justified, but one may disagree with some of his deductions. Disquietude and morbidity have proved at least as productive of great literature as have faith and eupepsia. The earlier New England was a far better society, but better societies do not necessarily foster better art. I fancy that Mr. Brooks's ardent patriotism makes him a little unjust to the voluntary exiles; and in his anxiety to conclude that Henry James was desiccated by transplantation, he is less than fair to the actual and staggering performance. James, it is true, was rarely at his best when characterising Europeans, but one may doubt whether Boston would have proved more propitious to him than London and Rye. The American not in America but in Europe was always his most inspiring subject, and the late *Ambassadors* remains, I suggest, his masterpiece.

To a foreign eye, moreover, the similarities between the earlier and later New England writers are almost as conspicuous as the differences. Their outstanding gifts, whether they have remained in Massachusetts and Connecticut or fled to Paris and London, have usually been impoverished by a lack of meatiness. Compared with the other great American writers, Whitman, Melville or Twain, they are, however beguilingly refined, deficient in sap, Emerson as noticeably as James, Longfellow as noticeably as Mr. Eliot. Mr. Brooks, who is not a New Englander, except in part by heredity and adoption, manages to minimise this deficiency in his subjects by means of the extreme sensuousness of his own style. Almost every sentence is so vivid as to invite quotation. Indeed, though he is never tawdry, the brilliance of colour throughout his panorama becomes occasionally fatiguing, so that one longs for a patch of grey. But how picturesque in the handsomest sense are his accounts of Emily Dickinson, Henry Adams and Amy Lowell! He has an extraordinary talent for describing the world of an author's imagination—those, for instance, projected by Howells and Miss Wilkins.

It will amuse us islanders to learn that Mr. Eliot is so deeply dyed and characteristic a New Englander:

> Eliot's mind was itself a compound of all the states of this latter day Boston, a scholarly "museum of idols," like Sargent's fresco. There one saw the Boston royalism, the Boston Anglo-Catholicism, the taste for Donne, Laforgue and Rémy de Gourmont, the interest in Dante, Sanskrit, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Elizabethan dramatists and poets, the classicism of Babbitt and Santayana. Eliot's mind was a mirror of Boston Alexandrianism, and its learned religiosity evoked in him later a singular form of Christianity—small faith, less hope, no charity at all.

Mr. Brooks, I must repeat, is something less than fair to expatriates. Another passage may be thought not irrelevant to much of Mr. Eliot's later criticism:

> Boston, congested with learning, was hypercritical, hyperaesthetic, cramped, self-conscious, tortured with notions and problems. Its conscience was always tripping up, invading spheres where it scarcely belonged, for the mind had lost the power of deciding simply; and Boston was full of a sad sterility, the fruit of emotional desiccation, that masked itself in assumptions and sometimes in sneers.

Nevertheless one must protest to Mr. Brooks that Mr. Eliot is the best poet in English of his generation, just as Henry James in his time was the best novelist. Nor do I believe that this view is due to my patriotic feelings. James and Mr. Eliot doubtless owe something to the country of their adoption, but their works have taken surprisingly little colour from the English environment. As a "melting pot" this island is a plain flop. An Englishman becomes American in a year or two, an American after half a century here will not become English. For us to claim Mr. Eliot and Henry James would be almost as conceited as for the Italians to claim Shelley and Landor.

One point seems to have escaped Mr. Brooks's so perceptive eye. He speaks with just enthusiasm of William James, whose letters reveal a man outstanding in intelligence, courage and humanity, a man utterly contemptuous of "the bitch-goddess, Success." Yet it was William James who unconsciously provided the go-getters of his time with a philosophical justification. His pragmatism made success the criterion of truth.

The New England stock is now utterly outnumbered by immigrants from Ireland, Scandinavia, Central and Eastern Europe. Dreiser, Dos Passos, Saroyan, Eastman, Lippmann, Huneker, Mencken—such names as these dominate the literary scene. The supreme painter of contemporary New England is none of its sons but Eugene O'Neill. Where Mr. Edmund Wilson comes from, I do not know—he is not mentioned in this book. New England, however, persists. Mr. Santayana, for all his Harvard years, has always remained obstinately Mediterranean, but there are the names of Edna St. Vincent Millay, E. E. Cummings, Conrad Aiken, Robert Frost and T. S. Eliot. The English visitor, thrilled yet bewildered by New York, a city in which he finds the Levant without its lightheartedness, can rediscover his bearings in Boston or a Connecticut village. Emerson and Thoreau, Hawthorne and Prescott, Henry James and Robert Frost, are similarly writers with whom, despite any difference of intonation, we feel immediately at home. To Mr. Van Wyck Brooks for his two lively and learned volumes about the writers of New England the readers of the other England will offer their respect and their gratitude.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

## POLITICS AND LAW

**Politics and Law in the United States.** By D. W. BROGAN. *Cambridge University Press.* 3s. 6d.

There must be very few Americans, as there is certainly no Englishman, who know more about the government of the United States than Professor Brogan. This brilliant little book, which is as packed with knowledge as it is delightful to read, is as good an introduction as there is to the complexities of its subject. Professor Brogan writes around four themes, the constitution, political parties, the President and Congress, and the political functions of the Supreme Court. Each of them is handled deftly and delicately, so that, immense as each of them really is, in the 120 small pages at his disposal, Professor Brogan has always the significant principle to enounce, and the happy example to illuminate. It is no small feat to write in so brief a compass a work that will stimulate the specialist not less than it will interest the general reader.

Not the least service this book will render is in the emphasis it brings to the understanding that American institutions are profoundly American in character and are only misunderstood when they are explained in terms of analogy. Here both Bryce and Dicey did no little harm by trying to find a common pattern where history and a very different social climate make the differences more important than the identities. It is not really possible to compare the President and the Prime Minister. The Senate is like no other second chamber in the world. An American cabinet minister may be less than a parliamentary under-secretary or more than some of Mr. Churchill's cabinet colleagues seem prepared to be. The Supreme Court combines the functions of the House of Lords and the judicial committee with an unpredictable tutelary role over the constitution. It is the master of the President and Congress subject only to the possibly beneficent alliance between the President and Death. An American Political Party is hardly, in the British sense, a party at all, but rather a loose confederation of semi-loyalties geared to biennial unity by the claims of election. All this Professor Brogan brings out with clarity and wit and incisiveness.

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In the space at his command, of course, he can do little more than indicate a conclusion rather than confirm a principle. There is one implicit problem in his book upon which he does not touch directly, but of which the importance grows ever more great. At a time when the federal solution is so widely in fashion, it is important for us to realise that few things stand so much in the way of social progress in the United States as an obsolete distribution of powers among state-units which zealously guard their prerogatives from invasion. Reaction fights its battle behind the barriers erected in an age which could not comprehend the implications of giant industry; and the difficulties of the amending power give to reaction, as the problem of child-labour has shown, a double dose of authority. Those who think of Europe in federal terms ought to reflect with some particularity on the lessons of American federalism; at least the great lesson should not be forgotten that unless codification keeps pace with custom, the result is likely to be civil war. HAROLD J. LASKI

## SCOTLAND YET

**Scotland in Modern Times. 1720-1939.** By AGNES MURE MACKENZIE. *Chambers.* 15*s.*

An eighteenth-century namesake of hers, says Dr. Mure Mackenzie, called the Scots tongue "fiery, abrupt, sprightly and bold." The words are not ill-matched to her own treatment of history. It is idiosyncratic, and readable in the extreme. Scotland is seen as a nation of Europe, and her history set into a frame of European events which she reflected, as in her splendid classical architecture or the democratic reaction to the French Revolution, or which she influenced as she did industry, political science, medicine, and romantic literature. The author divides the period into seasons, beginning with the desolation which followed that extraordinary bad bargain, the Act of Union, when Scotland sacrificed independence and her continental trade for under-representation in a Parliament which has never to this day given her special interests serious consideration. In the 1720's villagers in Lothian died of hunger, but by the end of the century Lothian farming was the best in the world. That change was part of what the author calls "spring," a betterment wrought by intelligent men devoted to their country. Through that age, to the "summer" of Scott's Edinburgh and Watt's Glasgow, a galaxy of great names shone in the skies of a poor nation of two million people. Some, *pace* Dr. Mure Mackenzie, owed their world influence to the English connection. Adam Smith could hardly have altered the economy of an empire, nor Mansfield confirmed its civil rights, save through the larger world "furth of Scotland." But there were plenty creating a vivid civilisation at home, shadowed by the decay of the Highlands. "Autumn" was the nineteenth century, the industrial age of machines and wonderful ships built on Clydeside by workmen living in one-room tenements; of Canada and New Zealand colonised by Highlanders driven to emigration by their own chiefs. "Winter" was the dreadful coma after 1918, giving way to the dramatic, literary, and industrial revival of the 'thirties. "Braird" the author calls it; the Scots word for the green gleam on the soil of new-springing corn.

Dr. Mure Mackenzie is highly eclectic. She includes names in her roll of "lost Scots" men living outside the country, which I, who am fully as proud a Scot as she, would not claim, Ruskin, Gladstone, the Ulsterman Kelvin; and omits some I hold Scottish, Byron for one. She relies overmuch on the general knowledge of their history kept alive in Scottish children by song and oral tradition; there is no account of the '45, for instance, though its after-effects are faithfully dealt with. And the background chapter on world affairs after 1918 reads like partially remembered leaders from the *Morning Post*; carping criticism is distasteful, but mistakes of fact at the rate of five to four paragraphs (p. 354) are too many, the more by token that these errors are often used as bases for inevitably misleading conclusions. For this is history *à thèse*; "aye the owercome o' her sang is 'Wae's me'"—for the free kingdom of Scotland; for the self-government by her own folk without which the body politic lacks its heart—and its head, too—and for which a share, however distinguished, in ruling Britain and founding the Empire is no compensation. Here many, possibly most, Scots agree with the author; and the patriotism which inspires her book expresses their growing desire to serve as well as to love their lovely land.

FREDA WHITE

## BEFORE OCTOBER

**Russia in Flux.** By SIR JOHN MAYNARD. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

That Stalin is an honest man, a handsome man and a well-dressed man the British public has been variously informed by Churchill, Shaw and Beaverbrook. At this point, the New (*ad hoc*) Enlightenment on the Soviet Union pauses while the Stalin caricature is revised into that of a hearty Old Boy who enjoys a joke and thirty-eight toasts. I don't know whether Sir John Maynard has ever met Stalin; *Russia in Flux* refers to him only four times and does not try to describe him. None the less, this book, which is a History of the Character of the Russian Peoples, gives a clearer picture of the man in relation to Russian history than any current description, either visual or verbal, in English terms.

History did not stop in 1917 and then begin anew, as some Communists, despite their dialectical materialism, suppose. It is merely true to say that in 1917 the workers and peasants, the "people without history," became historical. They revealed to the world a new *type* of Russian, bearing, however, the old Russian character.

Dostoevsky, drinking and gambling away his wife's last penny in Wiesbaden, then rushing back to Russia in an orgasm of penitence in order to denounce Westernism and invoke the Slav soul, whose fulfilment, as he pointed out in his famous speech at the Pushkin celebrations, required the seizure of Tsargrad (Constantinople)—Dostoyevsky with his Oxford Group Self-abasement, tears and passionate friendships, the darling of the Russian society where Rasputin ("Our Friend") later gave guidance, represents an aspect of Russian character fostered by the Greek Orthodox Church, but continuing in other forms under the Bolsheviks, too. Public admission of guilt, adulation of the ruler and subordination of the individual to the Idea are traditional commonplaces of Russia, which explains the confessions of the Moscow trials, the conventional invocations of Stalin and the cheapness of human life in the pursuit of Communism. To retain the *Sobornost* (the congregation) of Russia the pogrom was approved by the Orthodox Church. To retain the unity of the Party the Communists purged with equal severity. Sir John Maynard has extracted from the endless variety of Russian character the philosophical standard of value—the congregational idea—which makes the Slav recognisable in men as different as Dostoevsky and Lenin, and movements as varied as Pan-Slavism and Communism. The frustrated *dusha*—the Russian soul—of the drawing-rooms of the gentry under Nicholas II is only a step removed from Kamenev in the dock.

Sir John Maynard's book does the great service of destroying two black and white caricatures of the Russian—the mystic-masochist and the materialist-sadist. In their place he gives us a collection of photographs and paintings which, while explaining the continuity of Russian character, show how the influence of, and resistance to, European ideas cause a flux and reflux in Russian life, alternately debasing and ennobling the people.

> In the reign of Tsar Alexis, father of Peter the Great, a new thing happened. The Tsars did not allow foreign travel. It was treason, or something like it, to wish to go abroad.

These sentences from Sir John's introduction could be a motto for any of the other chapters in the book—for that on "Religious and Anti-Rationalist Thought," "The Orthodox Church and the Slavophils" or "The Coming of Marx" or "The Peasant in the Nineteenth Century." The self-exclusion of Russia from the Western


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and Eastern Worlds was the most important circumstance conditioning Russian life and its historical manifestations, its Church, its despotism and its revolutions—until 1917. After 1917 the Westernisers, the Revolutionaries who had learnt in exile, opened a window from Russia on to Europe, more important than St. Petersburg. The expansive years of building the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1935, when its ethical, moral, social and international purposes were stressed, were years of intellectual and physical communication between Russia and the workers and thinkers of Western Europe. The finest products of the Soviet system during the "closed" years from the purges to the outbreak of war had their origin in this period. The return to Slavism is serving the Soviet Union well in its defensive war on Russian soil; mixed with the scientific Socialist discipline which Stalin, more than anyone, has developed, it is an important cement for the Soviet's political unity. On the other hand, without that discipline, it makes easier a reversion to the old Russian obedience—that local indifferentism which, as Sir John points out, is an anarchic quality of the Russian peasant, a possible reflux at the present time from the effort of Socialism.

> The Great-Russian people found no difficulty in the formation of certain primitive aggregations; the patriarchal family; and communes of villages and even of larger units. Beyond these there was never an organic unity. . . . There are, in fact, two conflicting streams of tendency active at different levels. One, which may be loosely described as associational, brings the Russian people together to work out a common economic and social life, in the family, the *Mir* and the partnership of cultivators or artisans. The other—it might reasonably be called anarchical, in so far as it is inimical to the consolidation of the State—forces the primary units away from organic union.

I hope that Sir John Maynard will carry out his intention of further illustrating the character of Russia in the events after October. *Russia in Flux* is not a rehash of the inspiring and already well-told story of the Russian Revolution. It is Russia before 1917 seen from the peasant's hut, the metropolitan's stool, the worker's barrack, the editor's office and the Tsar's study. It is a fresh and permanent interpretation, useful to anybody who wishes to read his Tolstoy or his Pat Sloan with understanding.

MAURICE EDELMAN

## NATURAL SELECTION

**At Odd Moments.** Selected by BERNARD DARWIN. *Oxford University Press.* 5s.

Here is an anthology of literary extracts selected, Mr. Darwin tell us, because they are very old friends that from long affection and much bedside study he finds easy to read. Chosen, he says, on no particular plan, they have no more definite reason for their inclusion than his fondness for them. In short, the Darwinian principle of natural selection.

An anthology done on these lines by some people might annoy and startle its readers, even if it did not invite the attention of the police. But Mr. Darwin has a flair for the innocuous, which he saves from insipidity by an air of wondering if some of his extracts may not be rather too daring for timid readers. There is a lot of Dickens in his collection, and he refuses to apologise for this with a firmness which would be more necessary if Dickens had written like James Joyce. There are also many extracts dealing with cricket and games and sports; and here, too, Mr. Darwin digs in his heels, little likely though he is to alienate any but a very small minority by including Neville Cardus on the sweetness of a summer morning at Lord's, or himself on golf.

His taste in poetry is not oppressive. Eschewing the heroic, he includes a good deal of light verse, though of the kind in which, as he puts it, the laughter comes often near to tears. From the greater writers, whether in verse or prose, he gives passages which will not jar on those to whom they are new, and may give a subdued pleasure to those who have long been familiar with them. From Shakespeare we have two extracts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; from Dr. Johnson the lines on Robert Levet; from Dickens the storm in *David Copperfield*, Trabb's boy, Mr. Pickwick and the lady in curl-papers, Bella Wilfer's Pa, and so on; from Lincoln the Gettysburg speech; from Hazlitt such essays as *On Reading Old Books* and *Cavanagh the Fives-Player*.

HUGH KINGSMILL

**Horizon.** December. 1s. 6d.

The star-turn in Mr. Connolly's latest variety programme is Mr. E. M. Forster on "The New Disorder." "There will never be a new order, for there never has been an old one. . . . What I hope for and work for to-day is for a mess more favourable to artists than is the present one. . . . How can man get into harmony with his surroundings, when he is constantly altering them? . . . To me, the best chance for future society lies through apathy, uninventiveness and inertia." Mr. Forster has the most individual mind in England—the wisdom of the serpent and the surprisingness of the toucan. Mr. Raymond Mortimer, in his "Introduction to Balzac," uses a dash of malice to cover a dose of enthusiasm. Mr John Piper gives information about, and an interpretation of, that astonishing painter, Miss Frances Hodgkins. Mr. Tom Harrisson has read all the books about the war and finds sociological interest most evident in the trash. Sr. Barea succeeds in horrifying us with some "choses vues" and Sr. Luis Portillo manages the far more difficult task of exciting our most profound admiration, in a description of Unamuno's lonely courage. This is one of the most inspiring episodes of modern times.

**There Are No South Africans.** By G. H. CALPIN. *Nelson.* 10s.

A sympathetic appreciation of a phenomenon which is so little understood as Afrikaner nationalism deserves some commendation. The Afrikaners, as Mr. Calpin points out, have in the past been little touched by ideas or ideologies. Their feuds have raged about the claims of rival leaders, Retief or Potgieter in Trekker days, latterly Botha and Smuts, or Hertzog. But the pressure of outside influences threatening their cherished isolation has brought changes. Going in fear that Afrikaner ideals may be overwhelmed by British culture, at the same time that economic pressure is reducing many of them to the poor white level, the Afrikaners have in the end become too easy a prey to a movement based on ideas of blood and soil. Their "O.B." (*Ossewa Brandwag*) is sinisterly like National Socialism, and at the moment the signs are that it may break with precedent and end the present quarrels by choosing a leader of its own. No doubt Mr. Calpin is right to state unpleasant facts, and to refuse to slide over the fundamental roots of the divisions that make his real South Africans so few. The 50–50 policy of the so-called Fusion Cabinet of Hertzog and Smuts after 1933 probably did, in fact, only accentuate divisions by its care for the equality of the two languages; its dual citizenship and duality of status; its two national anthems. It is not made so clear how the breach is to be healed. Having a little patronisingly "explained" the Nationalists, Mr. Calpin does rather less than justice to other parties. His fellow English are "Colonial," lacking in taste and culture, second-rate. Negrophobes get a passing blow, but he truly reflects South Africa in concentrating on White politics and is not concerned about the rights of Africans. General Smuts, whom Mr. Calpin clearly admires, really comes off worst. After all the personal sacrifices he and other African leaders have made in the cause of racial reconciliation and co-operation, these 25 years or more, it is very hard for them to be put down as the apostles and chief representatives of *British* ideals. General Smuts, at least, has earned his place as a leader of the Western, Christian civilisation from which his Nationalist opponents would—blindly rather than deliberately—cut adrift.

**The Oaken Heart.** By MARGERY ALLINGHAM. *Michael Joseph.* 10s. 6d.

At the request of American friends, Miss Allingham has written a documentary of wartime life in an Essex village. *The Oaken Heart* is a good professional job in its kind, full of "human" stories, clearly descriptive and reasonably free from individual bias. Miss Allingham is neither exceptionally indignant about our mistakes, nor exceptionally lyrical about our virtues. She is a great admirer of the Air Force, Mr. Churchill and the English character, but to be otherwise that would make her exceptional: our normal mood at present is one of self-congratulation. Miss Allingham speaks


Christmas 1941

This Christmas please think of the patients in The Royal Cancer Hospital, visited with a malignant disease that is among the most dreaded enemies of mankind, and send a Christmas gift, however small, to The Secretary,

The Royal Cancer Hospital
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1941 Christmas
*Let the spirit of*
CHRISTMAS
*combine us all in good will to*

- THE MEN AND WOMEN OF H.M. FORCES.
- THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN BOMBED.
- THE AGED AND LONELY.
- THE CHILDREN—MANY ARE HAVING A THIN TIME.

Your gift to the Church Army's Christmas Fund can be allocated, if desired, to any of these purposes.

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for typical popular experience. The confusion and good intentions of the evacuation scheme, the anti-climax when the Wellsian air armadas missed their cue at the outbreak of war, the invasion scares, the emotional landslides of last summer and autumn —these things are set down graphically in the way they were felt and discussed in Miss Allingham's village. *The Oaken Heart* is probably as accurate and intimate a report as American friends are likely to get.

Authors who attempt to write for the wide world and a couple of hundred village neighbours simultaneously have a difficult pair of horses to drive. Social intercourse, alas, is not nourished on a ruthless veracity. Miss Allingham is not without courage in this awkward situation, but her characters are apt to change at times into jolly John Bulls of the routine sort, full of the pawky bravado and laconic invincibility which—although they are not untrue—decline so readily into what the stage knows as "character" parts. It is perhaps Miss Allingham's vein of sentiment at these times which sets one's teeth on edge. This apart, *The Oaken Heart* is well worth reading. Miss Allingham's temperate good-humour is attractive, her knowledge of Essex folk is mature and sympathetic, and she has a gift for realising events in the dimension of individual men and women.

## Week-end Competitions

### No. 620

**Set by Freda White**

We offer the usual prizes for three remarks made by your partner at dinner, to which no rational reply is possible. Example: "I always buy my books at Aspreys."

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, December 29th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 617

**Set by Raymond Mortimer**

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half-a-guinea are offered for two or three stanzas in the metre of *Don Juan* relating Juan's experiences in Simla, Vichy, the House of Commons or pre-war Paris.

**Report by Raymond Mortimer**

The House of Commons and Vichy were much the more popular choices, and while all the entries are skilful, not many are even intermittently dazzling. Peter J. W. Clemm had a specially bright idea—Juan discovering Gulbeyaz waiting for him on the platform of the Gare du Nord. Leslie Johnson enlivened the House of Commons for Juan's benefit with "The Lady Member for St. Blank-on-Sea, Bewitching, blonde and barely twenty-three." B. is vehement about Pétain:

This name had won a pretty name in story
For stern devotion to his Saint, Devoir:
Then, ribboned, bloodless, honoured, hollow, hoary,
Made his own land a Prussian abattoir:
Watched his own men—and would have watched his God
Go blindfold to the Prussian firing-squad.

Pibwob and Richard Pomfret were no less virulent. Nancy Gunter and Stanley J. Sharpless were alone in attempting Simla; both came near to a prize. I recommend that the First Prize be divided between W. E. B. Henderson and I.R.I.S. Second prize to William Bliss (if any opinions shock, it must be remembered that Byron was pro-French in the Napoleonic Wars).

### FIRST PRIZE

I

JUAN IN PRE-WAR PARIS

Hail Muse, etcetera! I had thought that *Sine Die* would be the adjournment of this saga.
But lo! I'm sending Juan o'er the briny
To ladies "fast" as—horses of the Aga,
And there he sports with many a Paris Phryne
And drinks appalling "Pop" until he's "gaga."
A course of conduct which, indulged in seriously,
Affects the system very deleteriously.

We want what at the moment we can't get,
So creeps o'er him a gentle melancholy.
He 'gins to think that Mimi and Annette
Are not a patch on English Meg and Molly:
And so he does a thing more foolish yet,
He spends a dreary evening at "Les Folies. . ."
His ears assailed by sultry Gallic crudities,
His eyes by frankly elephantine nudities.

Not *all* the time with ladies does he trifle
(Life's not *entirely* harlotry and drinking),
Or haunt those evil purlieus where a knife'll
Do its swift work, if you don't "cough" like winking:
He sees the Louvre, Notre Dame, goes up the Eiffel
(Our Juan's capable of cultured thinking),
But when at last he tries to slumber—Ah me!
The ceaseless taxi-tooting drives him balmy.

W. E. B. HENDERSON

II

JUAN AT VICHY

"This was the rendezvous of the infirm
Victims of age, the usual excesses
Both those we name and those we have no term
Polite enough for" (But the reader gusses)
"Here dragging their weak members to the therm-
-Al waters the most wretched of the species
Soaked in the bath or sipped the nauseous dram
For maux de foie or maladies des femmes.

Plus ça change"—thus spoke Juan, or thought
(since monologue
Is out of mode like Monsieur Maginot's
Defences and all's modern in my chronologue)
Thus *thought* he then as wrinkling his nose
He watched the old still chasing noon at one o'clock*
With the same sickly gusto in their woes
And gulping down with the same vile submission
Foul potions ordered by a new physician.

He found diseases just as various
But shifted from the body to the brain
Blind spots and shivering spiritual malarias
And general paralysis of the inane
Like causes, too, age, greed and fright victorious
Over things free and temperate and sane
But now the sick were statesmen and Pétain's
Infirmary was capital of France. I.R.I.S.

* *Note.*—This slightly modified version of the French "Chercher midi à quatorze heures" was required by the rhyme. But Byron took many greater liberties.

DON JUAN LOOKS IN AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

(See *Beppo*, xlvii–xlix)

"England! with all thy faults I love thee still";
So Byron sang, twice over, I remember.
I wonder if he'd love her now, when chill
Dark mornings choke the old year's dying ember;
Or "like her taxes"—when he paid the bill,
Or like our blacked-out London in December.
Would he, brave soul, rejoice to find a war on
And sigh "Sweet Coupons!"—in an oxymoron?

He "liked the Habeas Corpus" (when we've got it).
But if he visited, as I, the Commons,
He'd find we hadn't. Liberty?—we've not it;
For Hitler-Morrison, *sans* writ or summons
Can quod us at his own sweet will, 'od rot it!
Beside him, too, he'd find some precious rum-uns,
Beaverbrook bawling, dull Duff-Cooper cooping
And Eden perorating "past all whooping!"

And Attlee, Kingsley-Wood—and Anderson,
All at the game of beggaring-my-neighbour.
Lord! how their spoutings do our senses stun!
Lord! how the tubs of Britain they belabour!
If words could win the war, the job is done!
It's grand to see our Country thus in labour
And hear each M.P.'s several disquisition
On how to help her interesting condition!

WILLIAM BLISS


## BARCLAYS BANK

**(Dominion, Colonial & Overseas)**

PROGRESS IN DIFFICULT YEAR

THE following is an extract from a statement by the chairman, Sir John Caulcutt, K.C.M.G., on the report of the directors and balance sheet for the year ended September 30, 1941:

I am proposing on this occasion, having regard to the times, to confine my remarks to the domestic affairs of the bank. I am pleased to say that owing to the widespread distribution of our branch system we have been able to render many services to the Governments of the territories in which we operate. In this way we have been able to make a special contribution to the war effort. Following the military occupation of Abyssinia and Eritrea, and, at the request of the Authorities, we have opened branches at Addis Ababa and at Asmara.

The omission of the usual territorial survey of conditions does not mean that there is nothing of interest which could be said about events in the various countries with which we are concerned, but I feel that justice could not be done to the subject without incurring risk of infringing the regulations of the Censor.

Current and deposit accounts, at approximately £157,000,000, show a further record figure for this bank, being an increase for the year of over £30,000,000. Cash in hand has been maintained at about 33 per cent. of the liabilities, while the total amount of advances is approximately the same as a year ago. Our increased resources are reflected in the figures for investments, which include a substantial contribution to new Government issues; and in the figure for bills, in which are included our holdings of U.K. and South African Treasury Bills. The market value of investments is in excess of the figure at which they stand in our books.

The net profit for the year, after making provision for taxation and for bad and doubtful debts and contingencies, amounted to £390,685, compared with £423,692 last year. The sum of £171,936 was brought forward from October 1, 1940, making a total to be dealt with of £571,621. Having regard to the continued growth in the bank's liabilities to the public, the directors have decided to transfer £200,000 from the current year's profits to the reserve fund. In addition, a sum of £300,000 has been transferred to that fund from the contingency account, to which account we have during the past three years allocated £470,000 from our profits. These transfers will bring the reserve fund to a figure of £2,600,000. After making the above appropriation it is proposed to pay a final dividend of 4 per cent. (actual) on the Cumulative Preference Shares and 3½ per cent. (actual) on the "A" and "B" shares, less income tax at 8s. 10d. in the £ in all cases, payable on December 29, 1941, leaving £196,470 to be carried forward.

I have pleasure in expressing once again the board's thanks and appreciation to the boards overseas, to the general managers in London and in South Africa and to the whole of our staff here and overseas for the manner in which they are carrying on the business of the bank in these exceptional times.

I think we can look back on the past year's working with some satisfaction; it has been an eventful year, marked by many anxieties but some progress. I feel we have grounds for viewing the future with confidence.

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